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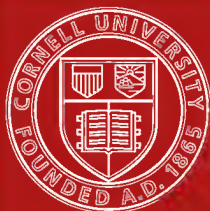
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THE PROPHECIES OF JEREMIAH.

INTRODUCTION.

§ 1. THE TIMES OF JEREMIAH.

T was in the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah, B.C. 629, that Jeremiah was called to be a prophet. At that time the kingdom of Judah enjoyed unbroken peace. Since the miraculous destruction of Sennacherib's host before the gates of Jerusalem in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign, B.C. 714, Judah had no longer had much to fear from the imperial power of Assyria. The reverse then sustained before Jerusalem, just eight years after the overthrow of the kingdom of Israel, had terribly crushed the might of the great empire. It was but a few years after that disaster till the Medes under Deïoces asserted their independence against Assyria; and the Babylonians too, though soon reduced to subjection again, rose in insurrection against Sennacherib. Sennacherib's energetic son and successor Esarhaddon did indeed succeed in re-establishing for a time the tottering throne. While holding Babylon, Elam, Susa, and Persia to their allegiance, he restored the ascendancy of the empire in the western provinces, and brought Lower Syria, the districts of Syria that lay on the sea coast, under the Assyrian yoke. But the rulers who succeeded him, Samuges and the second Sardanapalus, were wholly unable to offer any effective resistance to the growing power of the Medes, or to check the steady decline of the once so mighty empire. Cf. M. Duncker, *Gesch. des Alterth.* i. S. 707 ff. of 3 Aufl. Under Esarhaddon an Assyrian marauding army again made an inroad into Judah, and carried King Manasseh captive to Babylon;

but, under what circumstances we know not, he soon regained his freedom, and was permitted to return to Jerusalem and remount his throne (2 Chron. xxxiii. 11-13). From this time forward the Assyrians appeared no more in Judah. Nor did it seem as if Judah had any danger to apprehend from Egypt, the great southern empire; for the power of Egypt had been greatly weakened by intestine dissensions and civil wars. It is true that Psammetichus, after the overthrow of the dodecarchy, began to raise Egypt's head amongst the nations once more, and to extend his sway beyond the boundaries of the country; but we learn much as to his success in this direction from the statement of Herodotus (ii. 157), that the capture of the Philistine city of Ashdod was not accomplished until after a twenty-nine years' siege. Even if, with Duncker, we refer the length of time here mentioned to the total duration of the war against the Philistines, we are yet enabled clearly to see that Egypt had not then so far recovered her former might as to be able to menace the kingdom of Judah with destruction, had Judah but faithfully adhered to the Lord its God, and in Him sought its strength. This, unhappily, Judah utterly failed to do, notwithstanding all the zeal wherewith the godly King Josiah laboured to secure for his kingdom that foremost element of its strength.

In the eighth year of his reign, "while he was yet young," *i.e.* when but a lad of sixteen years of age, he began to seek the God of David his father; and in the twelfth year of his reign he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the high places and Astartes, and the carved and molten images (2 Chron. xxxiv. 3). He carried on the work of reforming the public worship without intermission, until every public trace of idolatry was removed, and the lawful worship of Jahveh was re-established. In the eighteenth year of his reign, upon occasion of some repairs in the temple, the book of the law of Moses was discovered there, was brought and read before him. Deeply agitated by the curses with which the transgressors of the law were threatened, he then, together with the elders of Judah and the people itself, solemnly renewed the covenant with the Lord. To set a seal upon the renewal of the covenant, he instituted a passover, to which not only all Judah was invited, but also all remnants of the ten tribes that had been left behind

in the land of Israel (2 Kings xxii. 3-xxiii. 24; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 4-xxxv. 19). To Josiah there is given in 2 Kings xxiii. 25 the testimony that like unto him there was no king before him, that turned to Jahveh with all his heart, all his soul, and all his might, according to all the law of Moses; yet this most godly of all the kings of Judah was unable to heal the mischiefs which his predecessors Manasseh and Amon had by their wicked government created, or to crush the germs of spiritual and moral corruption which could not fail to bring about the ruin of the kingdom. And so the account of Josiah's reign and of his efforts towards the revival of the worship of Jahveh, given in 2 Kings xxiii. 26, is concluded: "Yet Jahveh ceased not from His great wrath wherewith He was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations wherewith Manasseh provoked Him; and Jahveh said: Judah also will I put away from my face as I have put away Israel, and will cast off this city which I have chosen, Jernsalem, and the house of which I said, My name shall dwell there."

The kingdom of Israel had come to utter ruin in consequence of its apostasy from the Lord its God, and on account of the calf-worship which had been established by Jeroboam, the founder of the kingdom, and to which, from political motives, all his successors adhered. The history of Judah too is summed up in a perpetual alternation of apostasy from the Lord and return to Him. As early as the time of heathen-hearted Ahaz idolatry had raised itself to all but unbounded ascendancy; and through the untheocratic policy of this wicked king, Judah had sunk into a dependency of Assyria. It would have shared the fate of the sister kingdom even then, had not the accession of Hezekiah, Ahaz's godly son, brought about a return to the faithful covenant God. The reformation then inaugurated not only turned aside the impending ruin, but converted this very ruin into a glorious deliverance such as Israel had not seen since its exodus from Egypt. The marvellous overthrow of the vast Assyrian host at the very gates of Jerusalem, wrought by the angel of the Lord in one night by means of a sore pestilence, abundantly testified that Judah, despite its littleness and inconsiderable earthly strength, might have been able to hold its own against all the onsets of the great empire, if it had only

kept true to the covenant God and looked for its support from His almighty hand alone. But the repentant loyalty to the faithful and almighty God of the covenant hardly lasted until Hezekiah's death. The heathen party amongst the people gained again the upper hand under Hezekiah's son Manasseh, who ascended the throne in his twelfth year; and idolatry, which had been only outwardly suppressed, broke out anew and, during the fifty-five years' reign of this most godless of all the kings of Israel, reached a pitch Judah had never yet known. Manasseh not only restored the high places and altars of Baal which his father had destroyed, he built altars to the whole host of heaven in both courts of the temple, and went so far as to erect an image of Asherah in the house of the Lord; he devoted his son to Moloch, practised witchcraft and soothsaying more than ever the Amorites had done, and by his idols seduced Israel to sin. Further, by putting to death such prophets and godly persons as resisted his impious courses, he shed very much innocent blood, until he had filled Jerusalem therewith from end to end (2 Kings xxi. 1-16; 2 Chron. xxxiii. 1-10). His humbling himself before God when in captivity in Babylon, and his removal of the images out of the temple upon his return to Jerusalem and to his throne (2 Chron. xxxiii. 11 ff., 15 ff.), passed by and left hardly a trace behind; and his godless son Amon did but continue his father's sins and multiply the guilt (2 Kings xxi. 19-23; 2 Chron. xxxiii. 21-23). Thus Judah's spiritual and moral strength was so broken that a thorough-going conversion of the people at large to the Lord and His law was now no longer to be looked for. Hence the godly Josiah accomplished by his reformation nothing more than the suppression of the grosser forms of idol-worship and the restoration of the formal temple-services; he could neither put an end to the people's estrangement at heart from God, nor check with any effect that moral corruption which was the result of the heart's forsaking the living God. And so, even after Josiah's reform of public worship, we find Jeremiah complaining: "As many as are thy cities, so many are thy gods, Judah; and as many as are the streets in Jerusalem, so many altars have ye made to shame, to burn incense to Baal" (ii. 28, xi. 13). And godlessness showed itself in all classes of the people. "Go

about in the streets of Jerusalem," Jeremiah exclaims, "and look and search if there is one that doth right and asks after honesty, and I will pardon her (saith the Lord). I thought, it is but the meaner sort that are foolish, for they know not the way of Jahveh, the judgment of their God. I will then get me to the great, and will speak with them, for they know the way of Jahveh, the right of their God. But they have all broken the yoke, burst the bonds" (Jer. v. 1-5). "Small and great are greedy for gain; prophet and priest use deceit" (vi. 13). This being the spiritual condition of the people, we cannot wonder that immediately after the death of Josiah, unblushing apostasy appeared again as well in public idolatry as in injustice and sin of every kind. Jehoiakim did that which was evil in the eyes of Jahveh even as his fathers had done (2 Kings xxiii. 37; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6). His eyes and his heart were set upon nothing but on gain and on innocent blood, to shed it, and on oppression and on violence, to do it, Jer. xxii. 17. And his successors on the throne, both his son Jehoiachin and his brother Zedekiah, walked in his footsteps (2 Kings xxiv. 5, 19; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 9, 12), although Zedekiah did not equal his brother Jehoiakim in energy for carrying out evil, but let himself be ruled by those who were about him. For Judah's persistence in rebellion against God and His law, the Lord ceased not from His great wrath; but carried out the threatening proclamation to king and people by the prophetess Hulda, when Josiah sent to consult her for himself, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of the newly found book of the law: "Behold, I bring evil in this place, and upon its inhabitants, all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read: because that they have forsaken me, and burnt incense to other gods, to provoke me with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath is kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched" (2 Kings xxii. 16 ff.).

This evil began to fall on the kingdom in Jehoiakim's days. Josiah was not to see the coming of it. Because, when he heard the curses of the law, he humbled himself before the Lord, rent his raiment and wept before Him, the Lord vouchsafed to him the promise that He would gather him to his fathers in peace, that his eyes should not look on the evil God would

bring on Jerusalem (2 Kings xxii. 19 f.); and this pledge God fulfilled to him, although they that were to execute God's righteous justice were already equipped, and though towards the end of his reign the storm clouds of judgment were gathering ominously over Judah.

While Josiah was labouring in the reformation of public worship, there had taken place in Central Asia the events which brought about the fall of the Assyrian empire. The younger son of Esarhaddon, the second Sardanapalus, had been succeeded in the year 626 by his son Saracus. Since the victorious progress of the Medes under Cyaxares, his dominion had been limited to the cradle of the empire, Assyria, to Mesopotamia, Babylonia, and Cilicia. To all appearance in the design of preserving Babylonia to the empire, Saracus appointed Nabopolassar, a Babylonian by birth and sprung from the Chaldean stock, to be governor of that province. This man found opportunity to aggrandize himself during a war between the Medes and the Lydians. An eclipse of the sun took place on the 30th September 610, while a battle was going on. Both armies in terror gave up the contest; and, seconded by Syennesis, who governed Cilicia under the Assyrian supremacy, Nabopolassar made use of the favourable temper which the omen had excited in both camps to negotiate a peace between the contending peoples, and to institute a coalition of Babylonia and Media against Assyria. To confirm this alliance, Amytis, the daughter of Cyaxares, was given in marriage to Nebuchadnezzar, the son of Nabopolassar; and the war against Assyria was opened without delay by the advance against Nineveh in the spring of 609 of the allied armies of Medes and Babylonians. But two years had been spent in the siege of that most impregnable city, and two battles had been lost, before they succeeded by a night attack in utterly routing the Assyrians, pursuing the fugitives to beneath the city walls. The fortification would long have defied their assaults, had not a prodigious spring flood of the Tigris, in the third year of the war, washed down a part of the walls lying next the river, and so made it possible for the besiegers to enter the city, to take it, and reduce it to ashes. The fall of Nineveh in the year 607 overthrew the Assyrian empire; and when the conquerors

proceeded to distribute their rich booty, all the land lying on the western bank of the Tigris fell to the share of Nabopolassar of Babylon. But the occupation by the Babylonians of the provinces which lay west of the Euphrates was contested by the Egyptians. Before the campaign of the allied Medes and Babylonians against Nineveh, Pharaoh Necho, the warlike son of Psammetichus, had advanced with his army into Palestine, having landed apparently in the bay of Acco, on his way to war by the Euphrates with Assyria, Egypt's hereditary enemy. To oppose his progress King Josiah marched against the Egyptian; fearing as he did with good reason, that if Syria fell into Necho's power, the end had come to the independence of Judah as a kingdom. A battle was fought in the plain near Megiddo; the Jewish army was defeated, and Josiah mortally wounded, so that he died on the way to Jerusalem (2 Kings xxiii. 29 f.; 2 Chron. xxxv. 20 f.). In his stead the people of the land raised his second son Jehoahaz to the throne; but Pharaoh came to Jerusalem, took Jehoahaz prisoner, and had him carried to Egypt, where he closed his life in captivity, imposed a fine on the country, and set up Eliakim, Josiah's eldest son, to be king as his vassal under the name of Jehoiakim (2 Kings xxiii. 30-35; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 1-4). Thereafter Necho pursued his march through Syria, and subjected to himself the western provinces of the Assyrian empire; and he had penetrated to the fortified town of Carchemish (*Kirkesion*) on the Euphrates when Nineveh succumbed to the united Medes and Babylonians.—Immediately upon the dissolution of the Assyrian empire, Nabopolassar, now an old man no longer able to sustain the fatigues of a new campaign, entrusted the command of the army to his vigorous son Nebuchadnezzar, to the end that he might wage war against Pharaoh Necho and wrest from the Egyptians the provinces they had possessed themselves of (cf. Berosi *fragm. in Joseph. Antt.* x. 11. 1, and *c. Ap.* i. 19). In the year 607, the third year of Jehoiakim's reign, Nebuchadnezzar put the army entrusted to him in motion, and in the next year, the fourth of Jehoiakim's reign, B.C. 606, he crushed Pharaoh Necho at Carchemish on the Euphrates. Pursuing the fleeing enemy, he pressed irresistibly forwards into Syria and Palestine, took Jerusalem in the same year, made Jehoiakim

his dependant, and carried off to Babel a number of the Jewish youths of highest rank, young Daniel amongst them, together with part of the temple furniture (2 Kings xxiv. 1; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6 f.; Dan. i. 1 f.). He had gone as far on his march as the boundaries of Egypt when he heard of the death of his father Nabopolassar at Babylon. In consequence of this intelligence he hastened to Babylon the shortest way through the desert, with but few attendants, with the view of mounting the throne and seizing the reins of government, while he caused the army to follow slowly with the prisoners and the booty (*Beros. l.c.*).

This, the first taking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, is the commencement of the seventy years of Judah's Chaldean bondage, foretold by Jeremiah in xxv. 11, shortly before the Chaldeans invaded Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim; and with the subjection of Judah to Nebuchadnezzar's supremacy the dissolution of the kingdom began. For three years Jehoiakim remained subject to the king of Babylon; in the fourth year he rebelled against him. Nebuchadnezzar, who with the main body of his army was engaged in the interior of Asia, lost no time in sending into the rebellious country such forces of Chaldeans as were about the frontiers, together with contingents of Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites; and these troops devastated Judah throughout the remainder of Jehoiakim's reign (2 Kings xxiv. 1, 2). But immediately upon the death of Jehoiakim, just as his son had mounted the throne, Nebuchadnezzar's generals advanced against Jerusalem with a vast army and invested the city in retribution for Jehoiakim's defection. During the siege Nebuchadnezzar joined the army. Jehoiachin, seeing the impossibility of holding out any longer against the besiegers, resolved to go out to the king of Babylon, taking with him the queen-mother, the princes of the kingdom, and the officers of the court, and to make unconditional surrender of himself and the city. Nebuchadnezzar made the king and his train prisoners; and, after plundering the treasures of the royal palace and the temple, carried captive to Babylon the king, the leading men of the country, the soldiers, the smiths and artisans, and, in short, every man in Jerusalem who was capable of bearing arms. He left in the land only the

poorest sort of the people, from whom no insurrectionary attempts were to be feared; and having taken an oath of fealty from Mattaniah, the uncle of the captive king, he installed him, under the name of Zedekiah, as vassal king over a land that had been robbed of all that was powerful or noble amongst its inhabitants (2 Kings xxiv. 8-17; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 10). Nor did Zedekiah either keep true to the oath of allegiance he had sworn and pledged to the king of Babylon. In the fourth year of his reign, ambassadors appeared from the neighbouring states of Edom, Ammon, Moab, Tyre, and Sidon, seeking to organize a vast coalition against the Chaldean supremacy (Jer. xxvii. 3, xxviii. 1). Their mission was indeed unsuccessful; for Jeremiah crushed the people's hope of a speedy return of the exiles in Babylon by repeated and emphatic declaration that the Babylonian bondage must last seventy years (Jer. xxvii.-xxix.). In the same year Zedekiah visited Babylon, apparently in order to assure his liege lord of his loyalty and to deceive him as to his projects (Jer. li. 59). But in Zedekiah's ninth year Hophra (Apries), the grandson of Necho, succeeded to the crown of Egypt; and when he was arming for war against Babylon, Zedekiah, trusting in the help of Egypt (Ezek. xvii. 15), broke the oath of fealty he had sworn (Ezek. xvii. 16), and tried to shake off the Babylonian yoke. But straightway a mighty Chaldean army marched against Jerusalem, and in the tenth month of that same year established a blockade round Jerusalem (2 Kings xxv. 1). The Egyptian army advanced to relieve the beleaguered city, and for a time compelled the Chaldeans to raise the siege; but it was in the end defeated by the Chaldeans in a pitched battle (Jer. xxxvii. 5 ff.), and the siege was again resumed with all rigour. For long the Jews made stout resistance, and fought with the courage of despair, Zedekiah and his advisers being compelled to admit that this time Nebuchadnezzar would show no mercy. The Hebrew slaves were set free that they might do military service; the stone buildings were one after another torn down that their materials might serve to strengthen the walls; and in this way for about a year and a half all the enemy's efforts to master the strong city were in vain. Famine had reached its extremity when, in the fourth month of the eleventh year of Zedekiah, the Chaldean batter-

ing rams made a breach in the northern wall, and through this the besiegers made their way into the lower city. The defenders withdrew to the temple hill and the city of Zion; and, when the Chaldeans began to storm these strongholds during the night, Zedekiah, under cover of darkness, fled with the rest of his soldiers by the door between the two walls by the king's garden. He was, however, overtaken in the steppes of Jericho by the pursuing Chaldeans, made prisoner, and carried to Riblah in Cœle-Syria. Here Nebuchadnezzar had his headquarters during the siege of Jerusalem, and here he pronounced judgment on Zedekiah. His sons and the leading men of Judah were put to death before his eyes; he was then deprived of eyesight and carried in chains to Babylon, where he remained a prisoner till his death (2 Kings xxv. 3-7; Jer. xxxix. 2-7, lii. 6-11). A month later Nebuzar-adan, the captain of the king of Babylon's guard, came to Jerusalem to destroy the rebellious city. The principal priests and officers of the kingdom and sixty citizens were sent to the king at Riblah, and executed there. Everything of value to be found amongst the utensils of the temple was carried to Babylon, the city with the temple and palace was burnt to the ground, the walls were destroyed, and what able-bodied men were left amongst the people were carried into exile. Nothing was left in the land but a part of the poorer people to serve as vinedressers and husbandmen; and over this miserable remnant, increased a little in numbers by the return of some of those who had fled during the war into the neighbouring countries, Gedaliah the son of Ahikam was appointed governor in the Chaldean interest. Jeremiah chose to stay with him amidst his countrymen. But three months afterwards Gedaliah was murdered, at the instigation of Baalis the king of the Ammonites, by one Ishmael, who was sprung from the royal stock; and thereupon a great part of the remaining population, fearing the vengeance of the Chaldeans, fled, against the prophet's advice, into Egypt (Jer. xl.-xliii.). And so the banishment of the people was now a total one, and throughout the whole period of the Chaldean domination the land was a wilderness.

Judah was now, like the ten tribes, cast out amongst the heathen out of the land the Lord had given them for an inherit-

ance, because they had forsaken Jahveh, their God, and had despised His statutes. Jerusalem, the city of the great King over all the earth, was in ruins, the house which the Lord had consecrated to His name was burnt with fire, and the people of His covenant had become a scorn and derision to all peoples. But God had not broken His covenant with Israel. Even in the law—Lev. xxvi. and Deut. xxx.—He had promised that even when Israel was an outcast from his land amongst the heathen, He would remember His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and not utterly reject the exiles; but when they had borne the punishment of their sins, would turn again their captivity, and gather them together out of the nations.

§ 2. THE PERSON OF THE PROPHET.

Concerning the life and labours of the prophet Jeremiah, we have fuller information than we have as to those of many of the other prophets. The man is very clearly reflected in his prophecies, and his life is closely interwoven with the history of Judah. We consider first the outward circumstances of the prophet's life, and then his character and mental gifts.

a. HIS OUTWARD CIRCUMSTANCES.—Jeremiah (יֵרֵמְיָהוּ, contracted יֵרֵמְיָה, *Ierepelas*, Jeremias) was the son of Hilkiyah, one of the priests belonging to the priest-city Anathoth, situated about five miles north of Jerusalem, now a village called Anâta. This Hilkiyah is not the high priest of that name, mentioned in 2 Kings xxii. 4 ff. and 2 Chron. xxxiv. 9, as has been supposed by some of the Fathers, Rabbins, and recent commentators. This view is shown to be untenable by the indefinite מִן הַכֹּהֲנִים, i. 1. Besides, it is hardly likely that the high priest could have lived with his household out of Jerusalem, as was the case in Jeremiah's family (Jer. xxxii. 8, xxxvii. 12 ff.); and we learn from 1 Kings ii. 26 that it was priests of the house of Ithamar that lived in Anathoth, whereas the high priests belonged to the line of Eleazar and the house of Phinehas (1 Chron. xxiv. 3). Jeremiah, called to be prophet at an early age (נָעַר, i. 6), laboured in Jerusalem from the thirteenth year of Josiah's reign (B.C. 629) until the fall of the kingdom; and after the destruction of Jerusalem he continued

his work for some years longer amidst the ruins of Judah, and in Egypt amongst those of his countrymen who had fled thither (i. 2 f., xxv. 3, xl.-xliv.). His prophetic ministry falls, consequently, into the period of the internal dissolution of the kingdom of Judah, and its destruction by the Chaldeans. He had himself received a mission from the Lord to peoples and kingdoms, as well to break down and destroy, as to build and plant (i. 10). He was to fulfil this mission, in the first place, in the case of Judah, and then to the heathen peoples, in so far forth as they came in contact with the kingdom of God in Judah. The scene of his labours was Jerusalem. Here he proclaimed the word of the Lord in the courts of the temple (*e.g.* vii. 2, xxvi. 1); at the gates of the city (xvii. 19); in the king's palace (xxii. 1, xxxvii. 17); in the prison (xxxii. 1); and in other places (xviii. 1 ff., xix. 1 ff., xxvii. 2). Some commentators think that he first began as prophet in his native town of Anathoth, and that he wrought there for some time ere he visited Jerusalem; but this is in contradiction to the statement of ii. 2, that he uttered almost his very first discourse "before the ears of Jerusalem." Nor does this assumption find any support from xi. 21, xii. 5 ff. All that can be gathered from these passages is, that during his ministry he occasionally visited his native town, which lay so near Jerusalem, and preached the word of the Lord to his former fellow-citizens.

When he began his work as prophet, King Josiah had already taken in hand the extirpation of idolatry and the restoration of the worship of Jahveh in the temple; and Jeremiah was set apart by the Lord to be a prophet that he might support the godly king in this work. His task was to bring back the hearts of the people to the God of their fathers by preaching God's word, and to convert that outward return to the service of Jahveh into a thorough turning of the heart to Him, so as to rescue from destruction all who were willing to convert and be saved. Encouraged by Manasseh's sins, backsliding from the Lord, godlessness, and unrighteousness had reached in Judah such a pitch, that it was no longer possible to turn aside the judgment of rejection from the face of the Lord, to save the backsliding race from being delivered into the power of the

heathen. Yet the faithful covenant God, in divine long-suffering, granted to His faithless people still another gracious opportunity for repentance and return to Him; He gave them Josiah's reformation, and sent the prophets, because, though resolved to punish the sinful people for its stiff-necked apostasy, He would not make an utter end of it. This gives us a view point from which to consider Jeremiah's mission, and looking hence, we cannot fail to find sufficient light to enable us to understand the whole course of his labours, and the contents of his discourses.

Immediately after his call, he was made to see, under the emblem of a seething caldron, the evil that was about to break from out of the north upon all the inhabitants of the land: the families of the kingdoms of the north are to come and set their thrones before the gates of Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, and through them God is to utter judgment upon Judah for its idolatry (i. 13-16). Accordingly, from the beginning of his work in the days of Josiah onwards, the prophet can never be driven from the maintenance of his position, that Judah and Jerusalem will be laid waste by a hostile nation besetting them from the north, that the people of Judah will fall by the enemy's sword, and go forth into captivity; cf. iv. 5 ff., 13 ff., 27 ff.; v. 15 ff., vi. 22 ff., etc. This nation, not particularly specified in the prophecies of the earlier period, is none other than that of the Chaldeans, the king of Babylon and his hosts. It is not the nation of the Scythians, as many commentators suppose; see the comm. on iv. 5 ff. Nevertheless he unremittingly calls upon all ranks of his people to repent, to do away with the abominable idols, and to cease from its wickedness; to plough up a new soil and not sow among thorns, lest the anger of the Lord break forth in fire and burn unquenchably (iv. 1-4; cf. vi. 8, 16, vii. 3 f., etc.). He is never weary of holding up their sins to the view of the people and its leaders, the corrupt priests, the false prophets, the godless kings and princes; this, too, he does amidst much trial both from within and from without, and without seeing any fruit of his labours (cf. xxv. 3-8). After twenty-three years of indefatigable expostulation with the people, the judgment of which he had so long warned them burst upon

the incorrigible race. The fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign (B.C. 606) forms a turning point not only in the history of the kingdom, but also in Jeremiah's work as prophet. In the year in which Jerusalem was taken for the first time, and Judah made tributary to the Chaldeans, those devastations began with which Jeremiah had so often threatened his hardened hearers; and together with it came the fulfilment of what Jeremiah had shortly before foretold, the seventy years' dominion of Babylon over Judah, and over Egypt and the neighbouring peoples (Jer. xxv. 19). For seventy years these nations are to serve the king of Babylon; but when these years are out, the king and land of the Chaldeans shall be visited, Judah shall be set free from its captivity, and shall return into its own land (xxv. 11 f., xxxvii. 6 f., xxix. 10).

The progressive fulfilment of Jeremiah's warning prophecies vindicated his character as prophet of the Lord; yet, notwithstanding, it was now that the sorest days of trial in his calling were to come. At the first taking of Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar had contented himself with reducing Jehoiakim under his sway and imposing a tribute on the land, and king and people but waited and plotted for a favourable opportunity to shake off the Babylonian yoke. In this course they were encouraged by the lying prophecies of the false prophets, and the work done by these men prepared for Jeremiah sore controversies and bitter trials. At the very beginning of Jehoiakim's reign, the priests, the prophets, and the people assembled in the temple, laid hands on Jeremiah, because he had declared that Zion should share the fate of Shiloh, and that Jerusalem should be destroyed. He was by them found worthy of death, and he escaped from the power of his enemies only by the mediation of the princes of Judah, who hastened to his rescue, and reminded the people that in Hezekiah's days the prophet Micah had uttered a like prophecy, and yet had suffered nothing at the hand of the king, because he feared God. At the same time, Uriah, who had foretold the same issue of affairs, and who had fled to Egypt to escape Jehoiakim's vengeance, was forced back thence by an envoy of the king and put to death (Jer. xxvi.). Now it was that Jeremiah, by command of God, caused his assistant Baruch to write all the discourses he had

delivered into a roll-book, and to read it before the assembled people on the day of the fast, observed in the ninth month of the fifth year of Jehoiakim's reign. When the king had word of it, he caused the roll to be brought and read to him. But when two or three passages had been read, he cut the roll in pieces and cast the fragments into a brasier that was burning before him. He ordered Jeremiah and Baruch to be brought; but by the advice of the friendly princes they had concealed themselves, and God hid them so that they were not found (chap. xxxvi.). It does not appear that the prophet suffered any further persecution under Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin. Two years after the fast above mentioned, Jehoiakim rose against Nebuchadnezzar. The result was, that Jerusalem was besieged and taken for the second time in the reign of the next king; Jehoiakim, the leading men, and the flower of the nation were carried into exile to Babylon; and so Jeremiah's prophecy was yet more strikingly affirmed. Jerusalem was saved from destruction this time again, and in Zedekiah, the uncle of the exiled king, who had, of course, to take the oath of fealty, the country had again a king of the old stock. Yet the heavy blow that had now fallen on the nation was not sufficient to bend the stiff neck of the infatuated people and its leaders. Even yet were found false prophets who foretold the speedy overthrow of Chaldean domination, and the return, ere long, of the exiles (chap. xxviii.). In vain did Jeremiah lift up his voice in warning against putting reliance on these prophets, or on the soothsayers and sorcerers who speak like them (chap. xxvii. 9 f., 14). When, during the first years of Zedekiah's reign, ambassadors had come from the bordering nations, Jeremiah, in opposition to the false prophets, declares to the king that God has given all these countries into the hand of the king of Babylon, and that these peoples shall serve him and his son and his grandson. He cries to the king, "Put your necks into the yoke of the king of Babylon, and ye shall live; he that will not serve him shall perish by sword, famine, and pestilence" (chap. xxvii. 12 ff.). This announcement he repeated before the people, the princes, and the king, during the siege by the Chaldeans, which followed on Zedekiah's treacherous insurrection against his liege lord, and he chose for

it the particular time at which the Chaldeans had temporarily raised the siege, in order to meet the Egyptian king in the field, Pharaoh Hophra having advanced to the help of the Jews (Jer. xxxiv. 20 ff.). It was then that, when going out by the city gate, Jeremiah was laid hold of, beaten by the magistrates, and thrown into prison, on the pretext that he wanted to desert to the Chaldeans. After he had spent a long time in prison, the king had him brought to him, and inquired of him secretly for a word of Jahveh; but Jeremiah had no other word from God to give him but, "Thou shalt be given into the hand of the king of Babylon." Favoured by this opportunity, he complained to the king about his imprisonment. Zedekiah gave order that he should not be taken back to the prison, but placed in the court of the prison, and that a loaf of bread should be given him daily until all the bread in Jerusalem was consumed (chap. xxxvii.). Shortly thereafter, however, some of the princes demanded of the king the death of the prophet, on the ground that he was paralysing the courage of soldiers and people by such speeches as, "He that remains in this city shall die by sword, famine, and pestilence; but he that goeth out to the Chaldeans shall carry off his life as a prey from them." They alleged he was seeking the hurt and not the weal of the city; and the feeble king yielded to their demands, with the words: "Behold, he is in your hand, for the king can do nothing against you." Upon this he was cast into a deep pit in the court of the prison, in the slime of which he sank deep, and would soon have perished but for the noble-minded Ethiopian Ebed-melech, a royal chamberlain, who made application to the king on his behalf, and procured his removal out of the dungeon of mire. When consulted privately by the king yet again, he had none other than his former answer to give him, and so he remained in the court of the prison until the capture of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans (chap. xxxviii.). After this he was restored to freedom by Nebuzar-adan, the captain of Nebuchadnezzar's guard, at the command of the king; and being left free to choose his place of residence, he decided to remain at Mizpah with Gedaliah, appointed governor of the land, amongst his own people (chap. xxxix. 11-14, and xl. 1-6). Now it was that he composed the Lamentations upon the fall

of Jerusalem and Judah. After the foul murder of Gedaliah, the people, fleeing through fear of Chaldean vengeance, compelled him to accompany them to Egypt, although he had expressly protested against the flight as a thing displeasing to God (xli. 17—xliii. 7). In Egypt he foretold the conquest of the land by Nebuchadnezzar (xliii. 8–13); and, further on, the judgment of God on his countrymen, who had attached themselves to the worship of the Queen of Heaven (xliv.). Beyond this we are told nothing else about him in Bible records. Neither the time, the place, nor the manner of his death is known. We cannot confidently assert from chap. xlv. that he was still living in B.C. 570, for this [last] discourse of the prophet does not necessarily presume the death of King Hophra (B.C. 570). Only this much is certain, that he lived yet for some years in Egypt, till about 585 or 580; that his labours consequently extended over some fifty years, and so that, presuming he was called to be prophet when a youth of 20 to 25 years old, he must have attained an age of 70 to 75 years. As to his death, we are told in the fathers Jerome, Tertull., Epiph., that he was stoned by the people at Tahpanhes (*Daphne* of Egypt), and accordingly his grave used to be pointed out near Cairo. But a Jewish tradition, in the *Seder ol. rabb. c.* 26, makes him out to have been carried off with Baruch to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar at the conquest of Egypt, in the 27th year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. Isidor Pelusiota, *epist.* i. 298, calls him *πολυπαθέστατος τῶν προφητῶν*; but the greater were the ignominy and suffering endured by Jeremiah in life, the higher was the esteem in which he was held by posterity, chiefly, doubtless, because of the exact fulfilment of his prophecy as to the seventy years' duration of the Babylonian empire (cf. Dan. ix. 2, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 20 f., Ezra i. 1). Jesus Sirach, in his *Praise of the Prophets*, Ecclus. c. xlix. 7, does not go beyond what we already know from Jer. i. 10; but as early as the second book of the Maccabees, we have traditions and legends which leave no doubt of the profound veneration in which he was held, especially by the Alexandrian Jews.¹

¹ Thus the vision reported of Judas Maccabæus in 2 Macc. xv. 12 ff., to the effect that in a dream a man appeared to him, standing beside the high

b. HIS CHARACTER AND MENTAL QUALITIES.—If we gather together in one the points of view that are discovered in a summary glance over Jeremiah's work as a prophet, we feel the truth of Ed. Vilmar's statement at p. 38 of his essay on the prophet Jeremiah in the periodical, *Der Beweis des Glaubens*. Bd. v. Gütersloh 1869. "When we consider the prophet's faith in the imperishableness of God's people, in spite of the inevitable ruin which is to overwhelm the race then living, and his conviction, firm as the rock, that the Chaldeans are invincible until the end of the period allotted to them by Providence, it is manifest that his work is grounded in something other and higher than mere political sharp-sightedness or human sagacity." Nor is the unintermitting steadfastness with which, amidst the sorest difficulties from without, he exercised his office to be explained by the native strength of his character. Naturally of a yielding disposition, sensitive and timid, it was with trembling that he bowed to God's call (i. 6); and afterwards, when borne down by the burden of them, he repeatedly entertained the wish to be relieved from his hard duties. "Thou hast persuaded me, Lord," he complains in xx. 7 ff., "and I let myself be persuaded; Thou hast laid hold on me and hast prevailed. I am become a laughing-stock all the day long: the word of Jahveh is become a reproach and a derision. And I thought: I will think no more of Him nor speak more in His name; and it was in my head as burning fire, shut up in my bones, and I become weary of bearing up, and cannot." Though filled with glowing love that sought the salvation of his people, he is compelled, while he beholds their moral corrupt-

priest Onias, while he prayed for his people,—a man marked by his hoary hair and venerableness, engirded by wondrous and glorious majesty, and that Onias said: "This is the *φιλάνθρωπος* that has prayed so much for the people and the holy city, Jeremiah, the prophet of God;" that Jeremiah held out to Judas a golden sword, with the words, "Take this holy sword as a gift from God; therewith thou shalt smite the adversaries." Further, we have in 2 Macc. ii. 4 ff., that at the destruction of Jerusalem, Jeremiah hid the ark, the holy fire, the incense with its altar and the tabernacle, in a cave of the mountain from which Moses saw the promised land, and that this place will not be found again till the Lord gathers His people and is gracious to it. Hence arose the expectation which we find in Matt. xvi. 14, that Jeremiah will appear again as the forerunner of the Messiah.

ness, to cry out: "O that I had in the wilderness a lodging-place of wayfarers! then would I leave my people, and go from them; for they are all adulterers, a crew of faithless men" (ix. 1). And his assurance that the judgment about to burst on the land and people could not be turned aside, draws from him the sigh: "O that mine head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears! then would I weep day and night for the slain of my people" (viii. 23). "He was no second Elijah," as Hgstbg. *Christol.* ii. p. 370 happily puts it. "He had a soft nature, a susceptible temperament; his tears flowed readily. And he who was so glad to live in peace and love with all men, must needs, because he has enlisted in the service of truth, become a second Ishmael, his hand against every man, and every man's hand against him; he whose love for his people was so glowing, was doomed to see that love misconstrued, to see himself branded as a traitor by those who were themselves the traitors to the people." Experiences like these raised bitter struggles in his soul, repeatedly set forth by him, especially in xii. and xx. Yet he stands immovably steadfast in the strife against all the powers of wickedness, like "a pillar of iron and a wall of brass against the whole land, the kings of Judah, its rulers and priests, and against the common people," so that all who strove against him could effect nothing, because the Lord, according to His promise, i. 18 f., was with him, stood by his side as a terrible warrior (xx. 11), and showed His power mighty in the prophet's weakness.

This character of Jeremiah is also reflected in his writings. His speech is clear and simple, incisive and pithy, and, though generally speaking somewhat diffuse, yet ever rich in thought. If it lacks the lofty strain, the soaring flight of an Isaiah, yet it has beauties of its own. It is distinguished by a wealth of new imagery which is wrought out with great delicacy and deep feeling, and by "a versatility that easily adapts itself to the most various objects, and by artistic clearness" (Ewald). In the management of his thoughts Jeremiah has more recourse than other prophets to the law and the older sacred writings (cf. Koenig, *das Deuteronom u. der Proph. Jeremia*, Heft ii. of the *Allstl. Studien*; and A. Küper, *Jeremias librorum sacrr. interpretes atque vindex*). And his style of expression is rich in repetitions

and standing phrases. These peculiarities are not, however, to be regarded as signs of the progressive decline of the prophetic gift (Ew.), but are to be derived from deeper foundations, from positive and fundamental causes. The continual recurrence to the law, and the frequent application of the prophetic parts of Deuteronomy, was prompted by the circumstances of the time. The wider the people's apostasy from God's law extended itself, so much the greater became the need for a renewed preaching of the law, that should point to the sore judgments there threatened against hardened sinners, now about to come into fulfilment. And as against the guile of false prophets whose influence with the infatuated people became ever greater, the true witnesses of the Lord could have no more effective means of showing and proving the divineness of their mission and the truth of their testimony than by bringing strongly out their connection with the old prophets and their utterances. On this wise did Jeremiah put in small compass and preserve the spiritual inheritance which Israel had received from Moses a thousand years before, and thus he sent it with the people into exile as its better self (E. Vilm. as above). The numerous repetitions do unquestionably produce a certain monotony, but this monotony is nothing else than the expression of the bitter grief that penetrates the soul; the soul is full of the one thought which takes entire possession of its elastic powers, and is never weary of ever crying out anew the same truth to the people, so as to stagger their assurance by this importunate expostulation (cf. Haevern. *Introd.* p. 196). From the same cause comes the negligence in diction and style, on which Jerome in *Prol. in Jer.* passed this criticism: *Jeremias propheta sermone apud Hebræos Jesaia et Osea et quibusdam aliis prophetis videtur esse rusticior, sed sensibus par est*; and further in the *Proœm.* to lib. iv. of the *Comment.*: *quantum in verbis simplex et facilis, tantum in majestate sensuum profundissimus*. An unadorned style is the natural expression of a heart filled with grief and sadness. "He that is sad and downcast in heart, whose eyes run over with tears (Lam. ii. 2), is not the man to deck and trick himself out in frippery and fine speeches" (Hgsth. as above, p. 372). Finally, as to the language, the influence of the Aramaic upon the Hebrew tongue is already pretty evident.

§ 3. THE BOOK OF THE PROPHECIES OF JEREMIAH.

a. CONTENTS AND ARRANGEMENT.—The prophecies of Jeremiah divide themselves, in accordance with their subjects, into those that concern Judah and the kingdom of God, and those regarding foreign nations. The former come first in the book, and extend from chap. i.—xlv.; the latter are comprised in chap. xlv.—li. The former again fall into three groups, clearly distinguishable by their form and subjects. So that the whole book may be divided into *four* sections; while chap. i. contains the account of the prophet's consecration, and chap. lii. furnishes an historical supplement.

The *first* section occupies chap. ii.—xx., and comprises *six* lengthy discourses which contain the substance of Jeremiah's oral preaching during the reign of Josiah. In these the people is brought face to face with its apostasy from the Lord into idolatry; its unrighteousness and moral corruption is set before it, the need of contrition and repentance is brought home, and a race of hardened sinners is threatened with the devastation of their land by a barbarous people coming from afar: while to the contrite the prospect of a better future is opened up. By means of headings, these discourses or compilations of discourses are marked off from one another and gathered into continuous wholes. The *first* discourse, chap. ii. 1—iii. 5, sets forth, in general terms, the Lord's love and faithfulness towards Israel. The *second*, chap. iii. 6—vi. 30, presents in the first half of it (iii. 6—iv. 2) the fate of the ten tribes, their dispersion for their backsliding, and the certainty of their being received again in the event of their repentance, all as a warning to faithless Judah; and in the second half (iv. 3—vi. 30), announces that if Judah holds on in its disloyalty, its land will be ravaged, Jerusalem will be destroyed, and its people cast out amongst the heathen. The *third* discourse, chap. vi.—x., admonishes against a vain confidence in the temple and the sacrifices, and threatens the dispersion of Judah and the spoliation of the country (vii. 1—viii. 3); chides the people for being obstinately averse to all reformation (viii. 4—ix. 21); shows wherein true wisdom consists, and points out the folly of idolatry (ix. 22—x. 25). The *fourth* discourse, chap

xi.-xiii., exhibits the people's disloyalty to the covenant (xi. 1-17); shows by concrete examples their utter corruptness, and tells them that the doom pronounced is irrevocable (xi. 18-xii. 17); and closes with a symbolical action adumbrating the expulsion into exile of the incorrigible race (xiii.). The *fifth*, chap. xiv.-xvii., "the word concerning the droughts," gives illustrative evidence to show that the impending judgment cannot be turned aside by any entreaties; that Judah, for its sins, will be driven into exile, but will yet in the future be brought back again (xiv. 1-xvii. 4); and closes with general animadversions upon the root of the mischief, and the way by which punishment may be escaped (xvii. 5-27). The *sixth* discourse, chap. xviii.-xx., contains two oracles from God, set forth in symbolical actions, which signify the judgment about to burst on Judah for its continuance in sin, and which drew down persecution, blows, and harsh imprisonment on the prophet, so that he complains of his distress to the Lord, and curses the day of his birth. All these discourses have this in common, that threatening and promise are alike general in their terms. Most emphatically and repeatedly is threatening made of the devastation of the land by enemies, of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the dispersion of Judah amongst the heathen; and yet nowhere is it indicated who are to execute this judgment. Not until the threatening addressed to Pashur in xx. 4 are we told that it is the king of Babylon into whose hand all Judah is to be given, that he may lead them away to Babylon and smite them with the sword. And beyond the general indication, iii. 6, "in the days of Josiah," not even the headings contain any hint as to the date of the several prophecies or of portions of them, or as to the circumstances that called them forth. The quite general character of the heading, iii. 6, and the fact that the tone and subject remain identical throughout the whole series of chapters that open the collected prophecies of Jeremiah, are sufficient to justify Hgstbg. (as above, p. 373) in concluding that "we have here before us not so much a series of prophecies which were delivered precisely as we have them, each on a particular occasion during Josiah's reign, but rather a *resumé* of Jeremiah's entire public work as prophet during Josiah's reign; a summary

of all that, taken apart from the special circumstances of the time, had at large the aim of giving deeper stability to the reformatory efforts Josiah was carrying on in outward affairs." This view is most just, only it is not to be limited to chap. ii.-vii., but is equally applicable to the whole of the first section of the collected prophecies.

The *second* section, chap. xxi.-xxxii., contains special predictions; on the one hand, of the judgment to be executed by the Chaldeans (xxvii.-xxix.); on the other, of Messianic salvation (xxx.-xxxiii.). The predictions of judgment fall into three groups. The central one of these, the announcement of the seventy years' dominion of the Chaldeans over Judah and all nations, passes into a description of judgment to come upon the whole world. As introductory to this, we have it announced in xxi. that Judah and its royal family are to be given into the hands of the king of Babylon; we have in xxii. and xxiii. the word concerning the shepherds and leaders of the people; while in xxiv. comes the statement, illustrated by the emblem of two baskets of figs, as to the character and future fortunes of the Jewish people. The several parts of this group are of various dates. The intimation of the fate awaiting Judah in xxi. is, according to the heading, taken from the answer given to Zedekiah by Jeremiah during the last siege of Jerusalem, when the king had inquired of him about the issue of the war; the denunciation of the people's corrupt rulers, the wicked kings and false prophets, together with the promise that a righteous branch is yet to be raised to David, belongs, if we may judge from what is therein said of the kings, to the times of Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin; while the vision of the two baskets of figs in xxiv. dates from the first part of Zedekiah's reign, shortly after Jehoiachin and the best part of the nation had been carried off to Babylon. As this group of prophecies is a preparation for the central prediction of judgment in xxv., so the group that follows, xxvi.-xxix., serves to show reason for the universal judgment, and to maintain it against the contradiction of the false prophets and of the people deluded by their vain expectations. To the same end we are told in xxvi. of the accusation and acquittal of Jeremiah on the charge of his having

foretold the destruction of Jerusalem: this and the supplementary notice of the prophet Urijah fall within the reign of Jehoiakim. The same aim is yet more clearly to be traced in the oracle in xxvii., regarding the yoke of the king of Babylon, which God will lay on the kings of Edom, Moab, Ammon, and Phœnicia, on King Zedekiah, the priests and people of Judah; in the threatening against the lying prophet Hananiah in xxviii.; and in Jeremiah's letter to the exiles in Babylon in xxix., dating from the earlier years of Zedekiah's reign. From the dark background of these threatenings stands out in chap. xxx.-xxxiii. the comforting promise of the salvation of Israel. The prediction of grace and glory yet in store for Israel and Judah through the Messiah occupies two long discourses. The first is a complete whole, both in matter and in form. It begins with intimating the recovery of both houses of Israel from captivity and the certainty of their being received again as the people of God (xxx. 1-22), while the wicked fall before God's wrath; then xxxi. promises grace and salvation, first to the ten tribes (vers. 1-22), then to Judah (vers. 23-36); lastly, we have (vers. 27-40) intimation that a new and everlasting covenant will be concluded with the whole covenant people. The second discourse in chaps. xxxii. and xxxiii. goes to support the first, and consists of two words of God communicated to Jeremiah in the tenth year of Zedekiah, *i.e.* in prospect of the destruction of Jerusalem; one being in emblematic shape (xxxii.), the other is another explicit prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem, and of blessings yet in store for the race of David and for the Levitical priesthood (xxxiii.).

The *third* section of the book, chap. xxxiv.-xlv., has, in the first place, brief utterances of the prophet, dating from the times of Zedekiah and Jehoiachin, together with the circumstances that called them forth, in xxxiv.-xxxvi.; secondly, in xxxvii.-xxxix., notice of the prophet's experiences, and of the counsels given by him during the siege in Zedekiah's reign up till the taking of the city; finally, in xl.-xlv. are given events that happened and prophecies that were delivered after the siege. So that here there is gathered together by way of supplements all that was of

cardinal importance in Jeremiah's efforts in behalf of the unhappy people, in so far as it had not found a place in the previous sections.

In the *fourth* section, chap. xlv. — li., follow prophecies against foreign nations, uttered partly in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, or rather later, partly in the first year of Zedekiah. And last of all, the conclusion of the whole collective book is formed by chap. lii., an historical supplement which is not the work of Jeremiah himself. In it are notices of the destruction of the city, of the number of the captives taken to Babylon, and of what befell King Jehoiachin there.

b. ORIGIN OF THE COMPILATION OR BOOK of the Prophecies of Jeremiah.—Regarding the composition of the book, all sorts of ingenious and arbitrary hypotheses have been propounded. Almost all of them proceed on the assumption that the longer discourses of the first part of the book consist of a greater or less number of addresses delivered to the people at stated times, and have been arranged partly chronologically, but partly also without reference to any plan whatever. Hence the conclusion is drawn that in the book a hopeless confusion reigns. In proof of this, see the hypotheses of Movers and Hitzig. From the summary of contents just given, it is plain that in none of the four sections of the book has chronological succession been the principle of arrangement; this has been had regard to only in so far as it fell in with the plan chiefly kept in view, which was that of grouping the fragments according to their subject-matter. In the three sections of the prophecies concerning Israel, a general chronological order has to a certain extent been observed thus far, namely, that in the first section (ii.—xx.) are the discourses of the time of Josiah; in the second (xxi.—xxxiii.), the prophecies belonging to the period between the fourth year of Jehoiakim and the siege of Jerusalem under Zedekiah; in the third (xxxiv.—xlv.), events and oracles of the time before and after the siege and capture of the city. But even in those passages in the second and third sections which are furnished with historical references, order in time is so little regarded that discourses of the time of Zedekiah precede those of Jehoiakim's time. And in the

first section the date of the several discourses is a matter of so secondary importance that, beyond the indefinite intimation in iii. 6, there is not to be found in any of the headings any hint of the date; and here, upon the whole, we have not the individual discourses in the form in which they were under various circumstances delivered to the people, but only a *resumé* of his oral addresses arranged with reference to the subject-matter.

The first notice of a written collection of the prophecies occurs in xxxvi. Here we are told that in the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign, Jeremiah, by divine command, caused his assistant Baruch to write in a roll all the words he had spoken concerning Israel and Judah and all nations from the day he was called up till that time, intending them to be read by Baruch to the assembled people in the temple on the approaching fast. And after the king had cut up the roll and cast it into the fire, the prophet caused the words Baruch had taken down to his dictation to be written anew in a roll, with the addition of many words of like import. This fact suggests the idea that the second roll written by Baruch to Jeremiah's dictation formed the basis of the collected edition of all Jeremiah's prophecies. The history makes it clear that till then the prophet had not committed his prophecies to writing, and that in the roll written by Baruch they for the first time assumed a written form. The same account leads us also to suppose that in this roll the prophet's discourses and addresses were not transcribed in the precise words and in the exact order in which he had from time to time delivered them to the people, but that they were set down from memory, the substance only being preserved. The design with which they were committed to writing was to lead the people to humble themselves before the Lord and turn from their evil ways (xxxvi. 3, 7), by means of importunately forcing upon their attention all God's commands and warnings. And we may feel sure that this parenetic aim was foremost not only in the first document (burnt by the king), but in the second also; it was not proposed here either to give a complete and authoritative transcription of all the prophet's sayings and speeches. The assumption of recent critics seems justifiable, that the document composed in Jehoiakim's reign was the foundation of the book handed down

to us, and that it was extended to the compass of the canonical book by the addition of revelations vouchsafed after that time, and of the historical notices that most illustrated Jeremiah's labours. But, however great be the probability of this view, we are no longer in a position to point out the original book in that which we have received, and as a constituent part of the same. At first sight, we might indeed be led to look on the first twenty chapters of our book as the original document, since the character of these chapters rather favours the hypothesis. For they are all lengthy compositions, condensed from oral addresses with the view of reporting mainly the substance of them;¹ nor is there in them anything that certainly carries us beyond the time of Josiah and the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign, except indeed the heading of the book, i. 1-3, and this was certainly prefixed only when the book was given forth as a whole. But according to the statement in xxxvi. 2, the original manuscript prepared by Baruch contained not only the words of the prophet which he had up to that time spoken concerning Israel and Judah, but also his words concerning all nations, that is, doubtless, all the prophecies concerning the heathen he had till now uttered, viz. xxv. 15-xxxii., xli.-xlix. 33. Nor can the most important discourse, chap. xxv., belonging to the beginning of the fourth year of Jehoiakim, have been omitted from the original manuscript; certainly not from the second roll, increased by many words, which was put together after the first was burnt. For of the second manuscript we may say with perfect confidence what Ewald says of the first, that nothing of importance would be omitted from it. If then we may take for granted that the discourse of chap. xxv. was included in the book put together by Baruch, it follows that upon the subsequent expansion of the work that chapter must have been displaced from its original position by

¹ As to the putting together of the seven pieces which occupy chap. ii.-xxiv., Ewald (*Proph.* ii. S. 81, der 2 Ausg.) aptly remarks: "In tracing out these pieces from memory, the prophet manifestly started from a discourse, important in itself or its consequences, which he had delivered in some particular place; this remembrance then became the centre of the piece to be written, and to it he was easily able to attach much that was of kindred import."

the intercalation of chap. xxi. and xxiv., which are both of the time of Zedekiah. But the displacement of xxv. by prophecies of Zedekiah's time, and the arrangement of the several fragments which compose the central sections of the book now in our hands, show conclusively that the method and nature of this book are incompatible with the hypothesis that the existing book arose from the work written down by Baruch to Jeremiah's dictation by the addition and interpolation of later prophetic utterances and historical facts (Ew., Graf). The contents of chap. xxi.-xlv. were unmistakeably disposed according to a definite uniform plan which had regard chiefly to the subject-matter of those chapters, even though we are no longer in a position confidently to discriminate the several constituent parts, or point out the reason for the place assigned to them. The same plan may be traced in the arrangement of the longer compositions in chap. ii.-xx. The consistency of the plan goes to show that the entire collection of the prophecies was executed by *one* editor at *one* time. Ew., Umbr., and Graf conclude that the original book attained its final form by a process of completion immediately after the destruction of the city and the deportation of the people; but it is impossible to admit their conclusion on the grounds they give, namely, the heading at chap. i. 3: "until the carrying away of Jerusalem in the fifth month;" and the fact that what befell the prophet, and what was spoken by him after the city was destroyed, have found a place immediately after chap. xxxix. in chap. xl.-xlv. Both circumstances are sufficiently explained by the fact that with the destruction of Jerusalem, Jeremiah's work as a prophet, though not absolutely finished, had yet anticipatively come to an end. His later labours at Mizpah and in Egypt were but a continuation of secondary importance, which might consequently be passed over in the heading of the book. See the Comment. on i. 3. We are not sure that the period between the fifth and seventh months, xli. 1, during which Jeremiah and Baruch remained with the governor Gedaliah at Mizpah, was more suitable than any other for looking back over his work which had now extended over more than forty-one years, and by expanding the book he had at an earlier period written, for leaving behind him a

monument for posterity in the record of his most memorable utterances and experiences—a monument that might serve to warn and instruct, as well as to comfort in present suffering means of the treasure of hopes and promises which he has thus laid up (Graf). But, judging from Jeremiah's habit of mind, we imagine that at that time Jeremiah would be disposed rather to indite the Lamentations than to edit his prophecies.

Arguments for repeated editings and transformations of particular chapters have been founded partly on the subject-matter, partly on peculiarities in the form of certain passages, *e.g.* the alternation, in the headings, of the formulas *וַיְהִי דְבַר יְהוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר* or *וַיִּאמֶר אֵלַי יְרֵמְיָהוּ* ; and the title *יְרֵמְיָהוּ הַנָּבִיא*, which occurs only in certain chapters, xx. 2, xxv. 2, xxviii. 5, 6, and often, xxix. 1, 29, xxxii. 2. But on deeper investigation these arguments appear inconclusive. If we are desirous not to add by new and uncertain conjectures to the already large number of arbitrary hypotheses as to the compilation and origin of the book before us, we must abide by what, after a careful scrutiny of its subject-matter and form, proves to be certainly established. And the result of our examination may be epitomized in the following propositions :—1. The book in its canonical form has been arranged according to a distinct, self-consistent plan, in virtue of which the preservation of chronological order has been made secondary to the principle of grouping together cognate subjects. 2. The book written by Baruch in the fifth year of Jehoiakim's reign, which contained the oracles spoken by Jeremiah up till that time, is doubtless the basis of the book as finally handed down, without being incorporated with it as a distinct work ; but, in accordance with the plan laid down for the compilation of the entire series, was so disposed that the several portions of it were interspersed with later portions, handed down, some orally, some in writing, so that the result was a uniform whole. For that prophecies other than those in Baruch's roll were straightway written down (if they were not first composed in writing), is expressly testified by xxx. 2, xxix. 1, and li. 60. 3. The complete edition of the whole was not executed till after the close of Jeremiah's labours, probably immediately after his death. This work, together with the supplying of the historical notice in chap. lii., was probably the

work of Jeremiah's colleague Baruch, who may have survived the last event mentioned in the book, lii. 31 ff., the restoration of Jehoiakim to freedom after Nebuchadnezzar's death, B.C. 563.

§ 4. THE GENUINENESS OF THE BOOK AND THE INTEGRITY OF THE MASORETIC TEXT.

Jeremiah's prophecies bear everywhere so plainly upon the face of them the impress of this prophet's strongly marked individuality, that their genuineness, taken as a whole, remains unimpugned even by recent criticism. Hitzig, *e.g.*, holds it to be so undoubted that in the prolegomena to his commentary he simply takes the matter for granted. And Ewald, after expounding his view of the contents and origin of the book, observes that so striking a similarity in expression, attitude, and colouring obtains throughout every portion, that from end to end we hear the same prophet speak. Ewald excepts, indeed, the oracle against Babylon in chap. i. and li., which he attributes to an anonymous disciple who had not confidence to write in his own name, towards the end of the Babylonian captivity. He admits that he wrote after the manner of Jeremiah, but with this marked difference, that he gave an entirely new reference to words which he copied from Jeremiah; for example, according to Ewald, the description of the northern enemies, who were in Jeremiah's view first the Scythians and then the Chaldeans, is applied by him to the Medes and Persians, who were then at war with the Chaldeans. But with Ewald, as with his predecessors Eichh., Maur., Knobel, etc., the chief motive for denying the genuineness of this prophecy is to be found in the dogmatic prejudice which leads them to suppose it impossible for Jeremiah to have spoken of the Chaldeans as he does in chap. i. f., since his expectation was that the Chaldeans were to be the divine instruments of carrying out the judgment near at hand upon Judah and the other nations. Others, such as Movers, de Wette, Hitz., have, on the contrary, proposed to get rid of what seemed to them out of order in this prediction by assuming interpolations. These critics believe themselves further able to make out interpolations, on a greater or less scale, in other passages, such as x., xxv., xxvii., xxix., xxx.,

xxxiii., yet without throwing doubt on the genuineness of the book at large. See details on this head in my *Manual of Introduction*, § 75; and the proof of the assertions in the commentary upon the passages in question.

Besides this, several critics have denied the integrity of the Hebrew text, in consideration of the numerous divergencies from it which are to be found in the Alexandrine translation; and they have proposed to explain the discrepancies between the Greek and the Hebrew text by the hypothesis of two recensions, an Alexandrine Greek recension and a Babylonian Jewish. J. D. Mich., in the notes to his translation of the New Testament, i. p. 285, declared the text of the LXX. to be the original, and purer than the existing Hebrew text; and Eichh., Jahn, Bertholdt, Dahler, and, most confident of all, Movers (*de utriusque recensionis vaticiniorum Jer. græcæ Alexandr. et hebraicæ Masor., indole et origine*), have done what they could to establish this position; while de Wette, Hitz., and Bleek (in his *Introd.*) have adopted the same view in so far that they propose in many places to correct the Masoretic text from the Alexandrine. But, on the other hand, Küper (*Jerem. librorum ss. interpretes*), Haevern. (*Introd.*), J. Wichelhaus (*de Jeremiæ versione Alexandr.*), and finally, and most thoroughly, Graf, in his *Comment.* p. 40, have made comparison of the two texts throughout, and have set the character of the Alexandrine text in a clear light; and their united contention is, that almost all the divergencies of this text from the Hebrew have arisen from the Greek translator's free and arbitrary way of treating the Hebrew original. The text given by the Alexandrine is very much shorter. Graf says that about 2700 words of the Masoretic text, or somewhere about the eighth part of the whole, have not been expressed at all in the Greek, while the few additions that occur there are of very trifling importance. The Greek text very frequently omits certain standing phrases, forms, and expressions often repeated throughout the book: e.g. יהוה is dropped sixty-four times; instead of the frequently recurring יהוה צבאות or יהוה יצראל there is usually found יהוה. In the historical portions the name of the father of the principal person, regularly added in the Hebrew, is often not given; so with the title יהנביא, when Jeremiah is mentioned;

in speaking of the king of Babylon, the name Nebuchadnezzar, which we find thirty-six times in the Hebrew text, appears only thirteen times. Such expressions and clauses as seemed synonymous or pleonastic are often left out, frequently to the destruction of the parallelism of the clauses, occasionally to the marring of the sense; so, too, longer passages which had been given before, either literally or in substance. Still greater are the discrepancies in detail; and they are of such a sort as to bring plainly out on all hands the translator's arbitrariness, carelessness, and want of apprehension. All but innumerable are the cases in which gender, number, person, and tense are altered, synonymous expressions interchanged, metaphors destroyed, words transposed; we find frequently inexact and false translations, erroneous reading of the unpointed text, and occasionally, when the Hebrew word was not understood, we have it simply transcribed in Greek letters, etc. See copious illustration of this in Küper, Wichelsh., and Graf, *ll. cc.*, and in my *Manual of Introd.* § 175, N. 14. Such being the character of the Alexandrine version, it is clearly out of the question to talk of the special recension on which it has been based. As Hgstb. *Christol.* ii. p. 461 justly says: "Where it is notorious that the rule is carelessness, ignorance, arbitrariness, and utterly defective notions as to what the translator's province is, then surely those conclusions are beside the mark that take the contrary of all this for granted." None of those who maintain the theory that the Alexandrine translation has been made from a special recension of the Hebrew text, has taken the trouble to investigate the character of that translation with any minuteness, not even Ewald, though he ventures to assert that the mass of slight discrepancies between the LXX. and the existing text shows how far the MSS. of this book diverged from one another at the time the LXX. originated. He also holds that not infrequently the original reading has been preserved in the LXX., though he adds the caveat: "but in very many, or indeed most of these places, the translator has but read and translated too hastily, or again, has simply abbreviated the text arbitrarily." Hence we can only subscribe the judgment passed by Graf at the end of his examination of the Alexandr. translation of the present book: "The proofs of self-confidence

and arbitrariness on the part of the Alexandrian translator being innumerable, it is impossible to concede any critical authority to his version,—for it can hardly be called a translation,—or to draw from it conclusions as to a Hebrew text differing in form from that which has been handed down to us.”

We must maintain this position against Nägelsbach's attempt to explain, by means of discrepancies amongst the original Hebrew authorities, the different arrangement of the prophecies against foreign nations adopted in the LXX., these being here introduced in chap. xxv. between ver. 12 and ver. 14. For the arguments on which Näg., like Movers and Hitz., lays stress in his dissertations on Jeremiah in Lange's *Bibelwerk*, p. 13, and in the exposition of xxv. 12, xxvii. 1, xlix. 34, and in the introduction to chap. xlv. —li., are not conclusive, and rest on assumptions that are erroneous and quite illegitimate. In the first place, he finds in vers. 12–14, which, like Mov., Hitz., etc., he takes to be a later interpolation,¹ a proof that the *Book against the Nations* must have stood in the immediate neighbourhood of chap. xxv. To avoid anticipating the exposition, we must here confine ourselves to remarking that the verses adduced give no such proof: for the grounds for this assertion we must refer to the comment on xxv. 12–14. But besides, it is proved, he says, that the prophecies against the nations must once have come after chap. xxv. and before chap. xxvii., by the peculiar expression τὰ Ἀιθίοις at the end of chap. xxv. 13 (Septuag.), by the omission of xxvii. 1

¹ The difference in arrangement may be seen from the following table:—

<i>Septuagint.</i>		<i>Masoretic Text.</i>	
Chap. xxv. 15 ff.,	Prophecy against Elam,	Chap. xlix. 34.	
„ xxvi.,	„ Egypt,	„ xlv.	
„ xxvii. and xxviii.,	„ Babylon,	„ l. and li.	
„ xxix. 1-7,	„ the Philistines,	„ xlvii. 1-7.	
„ xxix. 7-29,	„ Edom,	„ xlix. 7-22.	
„ xxx. 1-5,	„ Ammon,	„ xlix. 1-6.	
„ xxx. 6-11,	„ Kedar,	„ xlix. 28-33.	
„ xxx. 12-16,	„ Damascus,	„ xlix. 23-27.	
„ xxxi.,	„ Moab,	„ xlviii.	
„ xxxii.,		„ xxv. 15-38.	

After which chap. xxxiii.-li. of the LXX. run parallel with chap. xxvi.-xlv. of the Masoretic text.

in Sept., and by the somewhat unexpected date given at xlix. 34. Now the date, "in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah," in the heading of the prophecy against Elam, xlix. 34, found not only in the Masoretic text, but also in the Alexandr. version (where, however, it occurs as a postscript at the end of the prophecy in xxvi. 1), creates a difficulty only if the prophecy be wrongly taken to refer to a conquest of Elam by Nebuchadnezzar. The other two arguments, founded on the τὰ Αἰλάμ of xxv. 13, and the omission of the heading at xxvii. 1 (Heb.) in the LXX., stand and fall with the assumption that the Greek translator adhered closely to the Hebrew text and rendered it with literal accuracy, the very reverse of which is betrayed from one end of the translation to the other. The heading at xxvii. 1, "In the beginning of the reign of *Jehoiakim* the son of Josiah king of Judah, came this word to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying," coincides word for word with the heading of xxvi. 1, save that in the latter the words "to Jeremiah" do not occur; and this former heading the Greek translator has simply omitted,—holding it to be incorrect, since the prophecy belongs to the time of Zedekiah, and is addressed to him. On the other hand, he has appended τὰ Αἰλάμ to the last clause of xxv. 13, "which Jeremiah prophesied against the nations," taking this clause to be the heading of Jeremiah's prophecies against the nations; this appears from the τὰ Αἰλάμ, manifestly imitated from the ἐπὶ τὰ ἔθνη. His purpose was to make out the following oracle as against Elam; but he omitted from its place the full title of the prophecy against Elam, because it seemed to him unsuitable to have it come immediately after the (in his view) general heading, ἃ ἐπροφήτευσεν Ἱερεμίας ἐπὶ τὰ ἔθνη, while, however, he introduced it at the end of the prophecy. It is wholly wrong to suppose that the heading at xxvii. 1 of the Hebrew text, omitted in the LXX., is nothing but the postscript to the prophecy against Elam (xxvi. 1 in the LXX. and xlix. 34 in the Heb.); for this postscript runs thus: ἐν ἀρχῇ βασιλεύοντος Σεδεκίου βασιλέως ἐγένετο, κ.τ.λ., and is a literal translation of the heading at xlix. 34 of the Heb. It is from this, and not from xxvii. 1 of the Heb., that the translator has manifestly taken his postscript to the prophecy against

Elam ; and if so, the postscript is, of course, no kind of proof that in the original text used by the Greek translator the prophecies against the nations stood before chap. xxvii. The notion we are combating is vitiated, finally, by the fact that it does not in the least explain why these prophecies are in the LXX. placed after xxv. 13, but rather suggests for them a wholly unsuitable position between xxvi. and xxvii., where they certainly never stood, nor by any possibility ever could have stood. From what has been said it will be seen that we can seek the cause for the transposition of the prophecies against the nations only in the Alexandrian translator's arbitrary mode of handling the Hebrew text.

For the exegetical literature on the subject of Jeremiah's prophecies, see my *Introduction to Old Testament*, vol. i. p. 332, English translation (Foreign Theological Library). Besides the commentaries there mentioned, there have since appeared : K. H. Graf, *der Proph. Jeremia erklärt*, Leipz. 1862 ; and C. W. E. Naegelsbach, *der Proph. Jeremia, Theologisch-homiletisch bearbeitet*, in J. P. Lange's *Bibelwerk*, Bielefeld and Leipz. 1868 ; translated in Dr. Schaff's edition of Lange's *Bibelwerk*, and published by Messrs. Clark.

EXPOSITION.

CHAP. I.—HEADING. CALL AND CONSECRATION OF JEREMIAH TO BE PROPHET.



VERS. 1-3 contain the heading to the whole book of the prophecies of Jeremiah. The heading runs thus: "Sayings of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests at Anathoth, in the land of Benjamin, to whom befell the word of Jahveh in the days of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign, and in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah king of Judah, until the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month." The period mentioned in these verses includes the time of Jeremiah's principal labours, while no reference is here made to the work he at a later time wrought amidst the ruins of Judah and in Egypt; this being held to be of but subordinate importance for the theocracy. Similarly, when the names of the kings under whom he laboured are given, the brief reigns of Jehoahaz and of Jehoiachin are omitted, neither reign having lasted over three months. His prophecies are called דְּבָרֵי יְרֵמְיָהּ, words or speeches, as in xxxvi. 10; so with the prophecies of Amos, Am. i. 1. More complete information as to the person of the prophet is given by the mention made of his father and of his extraction. The name יְרֵמְיָהּ, "Jahveh throws," was in very common use, and is found as the name of many persons; cf. 1 Chron. v. 24, xii. 4, 10, 13, 2 Kings xxiii. 31, Jer. xxxv. 3, Neh. x. 3, xii. 1. Hence we are hardly entitled to explain the name with Hengstb. by Ex. xv. 1, to the effect that whoever bore it was consecrated to the God who with almighty hand dashes to the ground all His foes, so that in his

name the nature of our prophet's mission would be held to be set forth. His father Hilkiah is taken by Clem. Alex., Jerome, and some Rabbins, for the high priest of that name who is mentioned in 2 Chron. xxii. 4; but without sufficient grounds. For Hilkiah, too, is a name that often occurs; and the high priest is sure to have had his home not in Anathoth, but in Jerusalem. But Jeremiah and his father belonged to the priests who lived in Anathoth, now called *Anâta*, a town of the priests, lying $1\frac{1}{4}$ hours north of Jerusalem (see on Josh. xxi. 18), in the land, *i.e.* the tribal territory, of Benjamin. In ver. 2 אֲשֶׁר belongs to אֵלֹהֵי: "to whom befell (to whom came) the word of Jahveh in the days of Josiah, . . . in the thirteenth year of his reign." This same year is named by Jeremiah in chap. xxv. 3 as the beginning of his prophetic labours. יְהִי in ver 3 is the continuation of הָיָה in ver. 2, and its subject is דְּבַר יְהוָה: and then (further) it came (to him) in the days of Jehoiakim, . . . to the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah, etc. In the fifth month of the year named, the eleventh of the reign of Zedekiah, Jerusalem was reduced to ashes by Nebuzar-adan, and its inhabitants carried away to Babylon; cf. lii. 12 ff., 2 Kings xxv. 8 ff. Shortly before, King Zedekiah, captured when in flight from the Chaldeans during the siege of Jerusalem, had been deprived of eyesight at Riblah and carried to Babylon in chains. And thus his kingship was at an end, though the eleventh year of his reign might not be yet quite completed.

Vers. 4-19. **THE CALL AND CONSECRATION OF JEREMIAH TO BE A PROPHET OF THE LORD.**—The investiture of Jeremiah with the prophetic office follows in four acts: the call on the part of the Lord, vers. 4-8; Jeremiah's consecration for his calling in vers. 9-10; and in two signs, by means of which the Lord assures him of certain success in his work and of powerful support in the exercise of his office (vers. 11-19). The call was given by a word of the Lord which came to him in this form: Ver. 5. "Before I formed thee in the womb I have known thee, and before thou wentest forth from the belly have I consecrated thee, to be prophet to the nations have I set thee. Ver. 6. Then said I, Ah, Lord Jahveh! behold, I know not how to

speak ; for I am too young. Ver. 7. Then said Jahveh to me, Say not, I am too young ; but to all to whom I send thee shalt thou go, and all that I command thee shalt thou speak. Ver. 8. Fear not before them : for I am with thee, to save thee, saith Jahveh." This word came to Jeremiah by means of inspiration, and is neither the product of a reflective musing as to what his calling was to be, nor the outcome of an irresistible impulse, felt within him, to come forward as a prophet. It was a supernatural divine revelation vouchsafed to him, which raised his spiritual life to a state of ecstasy, so that he both recognised the voice of God and felt his lips touched by the hand of God (ver. 9). Further, he saw in spirit, one after another, two visions which God interpreted to him as confirmatory tokens of his divine commission (vers. 11-19). Jeremiah's appointment to be a prophet for the nations follows upon a decree of God's, fixed before he was conceived or born. God in His counsel has not only foreordained our life and being, but has predetermined before our birth what is to be our calling upon this earth ; and He has accordingly so influenced our origin and our growth in the womb, as to prepare us for what we are to become, and for what we are to accomplish on behalf of His kingdom. This is true of all men, but very especially of those who have been chosen by God to be the extraordinary instruments of His grace, whom He has appointed to be instruments for the carrying out of the redemptive schemes of His kingdom ; cf. Jer. xlv. 2, 24, xlix. 5, Gal. i. 15. Thus Samson was appointed to be a Nazarite from the womb, this having been revealed to his mother before he was conceived, Judges xiii. 3 ff. To other men of God such divine predestination was made known for the first time when they were called to that office to which God had chosen them. So was it with our prophet Jeremiah. In such a case a reminder by God of the divine counsel of grace, of old time ordained and provided with means for its accomplishment, should be accepted as an encouragement willingly to take upon one the allotted calling. For the man God has chosen before his birth to a special office in His kingdom He equips with the gifts and graces needed for the exercise of his functions. The three clauses of ver. 5 give the three moments whereof the choosing consists : God has chosen him, has con-

secrated him, and has installed him as prophet. The reference of the words "I have known thee," Calvin limited to the office, *quasi diceret, priusquam te formarem in utero, destinavi te in hunc usum, nempe ut subires docendi munus in populo meo*. Divine knowing is at the same time a singling out; and of this, choosing is the immediate consequence. But the choosing takes place by means of *הִקְדִּישׁ*, sanctifying, *i.e.* setting apart and consecrating for a special calling, and is completed by institution to the office. "To be prophet for the nations have I set thee" (*נָתַן*, *ponere*, not only appoint, but install). The sense has been briefly put by Calv. thus: (*Jer.*) *fuisse hac lege creatum hominem, ut suo tempore manifestaretur propheta*. לְנָוִים, to the nations = for the nations; not for Judah alone, but for the heathen peoples too; cf. vers. 10, xxv. 9, xli. ff. The *Chethibh* אֲנִי־נָבִיא should apparently be read אֲנִי־נָבִי, from נָבִי, equivalent to נָבִי; the root-form נָבִי being warranted by Ex. xxxii. 4, 1 Kings vii. 15, and being often found in Aramaic. It is, however, possible that the *Chet.* may be only *scriptio plena* of אֲנִי־נָבִי, *a radice נָבִי*, since the *scriptio pl.* is found elsewhere, *e.g.* Hos. viii. 12, Jer. xli. 17, Ezek. xxi. 28, etc.—Ver. 6. The divine call throws Jeremiah into terror. Knowing well his too great weakness for such an office, he exclaims: Ah, Lord Jahveh! I know not how to speak; for I am נָעַר, *i.e.* young and inexperienced; cf. 1 Kings iii. 7. This excuse shows that לֹא אֵינִי דְבָרִים means something else than לֹא יָדַעְתִּי דְבָרִים, by which Moses sought to repel God's summons. Moses was not ready of speech, he lacked the gift of utterance; Jeremiah, on the other hand, only thinks himself not yet equal to the task by reason of his youth and want of experience.—Ver. 7. This excuse God holds of no account. As prophet to the nations, Jeremiah was not to make known his own thoughts or human wisdom, but the will and counsel of God which were to be revealed to him. This is signified by the clauses: for to all to whom I send thee, etc. The *עַל* belonging to תִּהְיֶה stands for אֵל, and does not indicate a hostile advance against any one. כֹּל after *עַל* is not neuter, but refers to persons, or rather peoples; since to the relative אֲנִי־נָבִי in this connection, *עַל־הֵם* is quite a natural completion; cf. Isa. viii. 12, and Ew. § 331, c. Only to those men or peoples is he to go to whom God sends him;

and to them he is to declare only what God commands him. And so he needs be in no anxiety on this head, that, as a youth, he has no experience in the matter of speaking.—Ver. 8. Just as little needs youthful bashfulness or shy unwillingness to speak before high and mighty personages stand as a hindrance in the way of his accepting God's call. The Lord will be with him, so that he needs have no fear for any man. The suffix in מִפְּנֵיהֶם refers to all to whom God sends him (ver. 7). These, enraged by the threatenings of punishment which he must proclaim to them, will seek to persecute him and put him to death (cf. ver. 19); but God promises to rescue him from every distress and danger which the fulfilment of his duties can bring upon him. Yet God does not let the matter cease with this pledge; but, further, He consecrates him to his calling.

Vers. 9 and 10. *The Consecration*.—Ver. 9. "And Jahveh stretched forth His hand, and touched my mouth, and Jahveh said to me, Behold, I put my words into thy mouth. Ver. 10. Behold, I set thee this day over the nations, and over the kingdoms, to root up and to ruin, to destroy and to demolish, to build and to plant." In order to assure him by overt act of His support, the Lord gives him a palpable pledge. He stretches out His hand and causes it to touch his mouth (cf. Isa. vi. 7); while, as explanation of this symbolical act, He adds: I have put my words in thy mouth. The hand is the instrument of making and doing; the touching of Jeremiah's mouth by the hand of God is consequently an emblematical token that God frames in his mouth what he is to speak. It is a tangible pledge of *ἐμπνευσις*, *inspiratio*, embodiment of that influence exercised on the human spirit, by means of which the holy men of God speak, being moved by the Holy Ghost, 2 Pet. i. 21 (Nägelsb.). The act is a real occurrence, taking place not indeed in the earthly, corporeal sphere, but experienced in spirit, and of the nature of ecstasy. By means of it God has consecrated him to be His prophet, and endowed him for the discharge of his duties; He may now entrust him with His commission to the peoples and kingdoms, and set him over them as His prophet who proclaims to them His word. The contents of this proclaiming are indicated in the following infinitive clauses. With the words of the Lord he is to destroy and to build up peoples and

kingdoms. The word of God is a power that carries out His will, and accomplishes that whereto He sends it, Isa. lv. 10 ff. Against this power nothing earthly can stand; it is a hammer that breaks rocks in pieces, xxiii. 29. What is here said of the word of Jahveh to be preached by Jeremiah is said of Jahveh Himself in xxxi. 28. Its power is to show itself in two ways, in destroying and in building up. The destroying is not set down as a mere preliminary, but is expressed by means of four different words, whereas the building is given only in two words, and these standing after the four; in order, doubtless, to indicate that the labours of Jeremiah should consist, in the first place and for the most part, in proclaiming judgment upon the nations. The assonant verbs נָהַשׁ and נָחַץ are joined to heighten the sense; for the same reason לְהָרוֹס is added to לְהַאֲבִיר, and in the antithesis לְבָטֹעַ is joined with לְבָנוֹת.¹

Vers. 11–16. *The Confirmatory Tokens.*—The first is given in vers. 11 and 12: “And there came to me the word of Jahveh, saying, What seest thou, Jeremiah? And I said, I see an almond rod. Then Jahveh said to me, Thou hast seen aright: for I will keep watch over my word to fulfil it.” With the consecration of the prophet to his office are associated two visions, to give him a surety of the divine promise regarding the discharge of the duties imposed on him. First, Jeremiah sees in spirit a rod or twig of an almond tree. God calls his attention to this vision, and interprets it to him as a symbol of the swift fulfilment of His word. The choice of this symbol for the purpose given is suggested by the Hebrew name for the almond tree, שִׁקְרִי, the wakeful, the vigilant; because this tree begins to blossom and expand its leaves in January, when the other trees are still in their winter’s sleep (*florat omnium prima mense Januario, Martio vero poma maturat.* Plin. h. n. xvi. 42, and Von Schubert, *Reise* iii. S. 14), and so of all trees awakes earliest to new life. Without any sufficient reason Graf has combated this meaning for שִׁקְרִי, proposing to change שִׁקְרִי into

¹ The LXX. have omitted לְהָרוֹס, and hence Hitz. infers the spuriousness of this word. But in the parallel passage, xxxi. 28, the LXX. have rendered all the four words by the one καθαιρεῖν; and Hitz. does not then pronounce the other three spurious.

שָׁקֵר, and, with Aquil., Sym., and Jerome, to translate שָׁקֵר מַקֵּל watchful twig, *virga vigilans*, i.e. a twig whose eyes are open, whose buds have opened, burst; but he has not even attempted to give any authority for the use of the verb שָׁקֵר for the bursting of buds, much less justified it. In the explanation of this symbol between the words, thou hast seen aright, and the grounding clause, for I will keep watch, there is omitted the intermediate thought: it is indeed a שָׁקֵר. The twig thou hast seen is an emblem of what I shall do; for I will keep watch over my word, will be watchful to fulfil it. This interpretation of the symbol shows besides that מַקֵּל is not here to be taken, as by Kimchi, Vatabl., Seb. Schmidt, Nägelsb., and others, for a stick to beat with, or as a threatening rod of correction. The reasons alleged by Nägelsb. for this view are utterly inconclusive. For his assertion, that מַקֵּל always means a stick, and never a fresh, leafy branch, is proved to be false by Gen. xxx. 37; and the supposed climax found by ancient expositors in the two symbols: rod—boiling caldron, put thus by Jerome: *qui noluerint percutiente virga emendari, mittentur in ollam æneam atque succensam*, is forced into the text by a false interpretation of the figure of the seething pot. The figure of the almond rod was meant only to afford to the prophet surety for the speedy and certain fulfilment of the word of God proclaimed by him. It is the second emblem alone that has anything to do with the contents of his preaching.

Vers. 13-16. *The Seething Pot*.—Ver. 13. "And there came to me the word of Jahveh for the second time, saying, What seest thou? And I said: I see a seething-pot; and it looketh hither from the north. Ver. 14. Then said Jahveh to me: From the north will trouble break forth upon all inhabitants of the land. Ver. 15. For, behold, I call to all families of the kingdoms towards the north, saith Jahveh; that they come and set each his throne before the gates of Jerusalem, and against all her walls round about, and against all cities of Judah. Ver. 16. And I will pronounce judgment against them for all their wickedness, in that they have forsaken me, and have offered odours to other gods, and worshipped the work of their hands." כִּי is a large pot or caldron in which can be cooked vegetables or meat for many persons at once;

cf. 2 Kings iv. 38 ff., Ezek. xxiv. 3 ff. נִפְּחַ, fanned, blown upon, used of fire, Ezek. xxi. 36, xxii. 20 f.; then by transference, seething, steaming, since the caldron under which fire is fanned steams, its contents boil; cf. Job xli. 12. The נִפְּחַ of the pot is the side turned to the spectator (the prophet), the side towards the front. This is turned from the north this way, *i.e.* set so that its contents will run thence this way. נִפְּחַ, properly: towards the north; then, that which lies towards the north, or the northerly direction. In the interpretation of this symbol in ver. 14, נִפְּחַ, assonant to נִפְּחַ, is introduced, just as in Amos viii. 2 נִפְּחַ is explained by נִפְּחַ; so that there was no occasion for the conjecture of Houbig. and Graf: נִפְּחַ, it is fanned up; and against this we have Hitzig's objection that the Hophal of נִפְּחַ never occurs. Equally uncalled for is Hitzig's own conjecture, נִפְּחַ, it will steam, fume, be kindled; while against this we have the fact, that as to נִפְּחַ no evidence can be given for the meaning be kindled, and that we have no cases of such a mode of speaking as: the trouble is fuming, steaming up. The Arabian poetical saying: their pot steams or boils, *i.e.* a war is being prepared by them, is not sufficient to justify such a figure. We hold then נִפְּחַ for the correct reading, and decline to be led astray by the paraphrastic *ἐκκαυθήσεται* of the LXX., since נִפְּחַ gives a suitable sense. It is true, indeed, that נִפְּחַ usually means open; but an opening of the caldron by the removal of the lid is not (with Graf) to be thought of. But, again, נִפְּחַ has the derived sig. let loose, let off (cf. נִפְּחַ נִפְּחַ, Isa. xiv. 17), from which there can be no difficulty in inferring for the Niph. the sig. be let loose, and in the case of trouble, calamity: break forth. That which is in the pot runs over as the heat increases, and pours itself on the hearth or ground. If the seething contents of the pot represent disaster, their running over will point to its being let loose, its breaking out. יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ are the inhabitants of the land of Judah, as the interpretation in ver. 15 shows. In ver. 15 reference to the figure is given up, and the further meaning is given in direct statement. The Lord will call to all families of the kingdoms of the north, and they will come (= that they are to come). The kingdoms of the north are not merely the kingdoms of Syria, but in general those of Upper Asia; since all armies marching

from the Euphrates towards Palestine entered the land from the north. מִשְׁפָּחוֹת, families, are the separate races of nations, hence often used in parallelism with גוֹיִם; cf. x. 25, Nahum iii. 4. We must not conclude from this explanation of the vision seen that the seething pot symbolizes the Chaldeans themselves or the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar; such a figure would be too unnatural. The seething pot, whose contents boil over, symbolizes the disaster and ruin which the families of the kingdoms of the north will pour out on Judah.—Ver. 15 is not the precise interpretation of the picture seen, but a direct statement of the afflictions about to fall on the inhabitants of Judah. “They will set each his throne.” The representatives of the kingdoms are meant, the kings and generals. To set one’s throne (נָתַן or שָׂא; cf. xliii. 10, xlix. 38) is a figure for the establishing of sovereignty. כִּסֵּא, seat or throne, is not the seat of judgment, but the throne of the sovereign; cf. the expression: set the throne upon these stones, xliii. 10; where a passing of judgment on the stones being out of the question, the only idea is the setting up of dominion, as is put beyond doubt by the parallel clause: to spread out his state carpet upon the stones. “Before the gates of Jerusalem:” not merely in order to besiege the city and occupy the outlets from it (Jerome and others), but to lord it over the city and its inhabitants. If we take the figurative expression in this sense, the further statement fits well into it, and we have no need to take refuge in Hitzig’s unnatural view that these clauses are not dependent on נָתַנוּ וְגוֹ, but on וְכָאֵל. For the words: they set up their dominion against the walls of Jerusalem, and against all cities of Judah, give the suitable sense, that they will use violence against the walls and cities.—Ver. 16. God holds judgment upon the inhabitants of Judah in this very way, viz. by bringing these nations and permitting them to set up their lordship before the gates of Jerusalem, and against all cities of Judah. The suffix in אֹתָם refers to יִשְׂרָאֵל הָאֲזָרָן, ver. 14, and אֹתָם stands by later usage for אֹתָם, as frequently in Jer.; cf. Ew. § 264, b. דְּבַר מִשְׁפָּטִים אֶתְרֵם, speak judgment, properly, have a lawsuit with one, an expression peculiar to Jeremiah,—cf. iv. 12, xii. 1, xxxix. 5, lii. 9, and 2 Kings xxv. 6,—is in substance equivalent to אֵת מִשְׁפָּט, plead with one, cf. xii. 1 with ii. 35, Ezek. xx. 35 ff., and

signifies not only remonstrating against wrong doing, but also the passing of condemnation, and so comprehends trial and sentencing; cf. xxxix. 5, lii. 9. "All their wickedness" is more exactly defined in the following relative clauses; it consists in their apostasy from God, and their worship of heathen gods and idols made by themselves; cf. xix. 4, 1 Kings xi. 33, 2 Kings xxii. 17. קָטַר, offer odours, cause to rise in smoke, used not of the burning of incense alone, but of all offerings upon the altar, bloody offerings and meat-offerings; hence frequently in parallelism with זָבַח; cf. Hos. iv. 13, xi. 2, etc. In the Pentateuch the Hiphil is used for this sense. Instead of the plural מַעֲשֵׂי, many mss. give the singular מַעֲשֶׂה as the ordinary expression for the productions of the hand, handiwork; cf. xxv. 6, 7, 14, xxxii. 30, 2 Kings xxii. 17, etc.; but the plural too is found in xlv. 8, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 25, and is approved by these passages. The sense is no way affected by this variation.

Vers. 17-19. The interpretation of the symbols is followed by a charge to Jeremiah to address himself stoutly to his duties, and to discharge them fearlessly, together with still further and fuller assurance of powerful divine assistance.—Ver. 17. "But thou, gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak to them all that I command thee: be not dismayed before them, lest I dismay thee before them. Ver. 18. And I, behold I make thee this day a strong city, an iron pillar, a brazen wall against the whole land, the kings of Judah, its princes, its priests, and the people of the land. Ver. 19. They shall strive against thee, but not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith Jahveh, to save thee." To gird up the loins, *i.e.* to fasten or tuck up with the girdle the long wide garment, in order to make oneself fit and ready for labour, for a journey, or a race (Ex. xii. 11; 1 Kings xviii. 46; 2 Kings iv. 29, ix. 1), or for battle (Job xxxviii. 3, xl. 7). Meaning: equip thyself and arise to preach my words to the inhabitants of the land. In וְאַל-יִתְחַת מ' and וְאַל-יִתְחַת ל' there is a play on words. The Niph. sig. broken in spirit by terror and anxiety; the Hiph. to throw into terror and anguish. If Jer. appears before his adversaries in terror, then he will have cause to be terrified for them; only if by unshaken confidence in the power of the word he preaches in the name of the Lord, will he be able to accomplish anything.

Such confidence he has reason to cherish, for God will furnish him with the strength necessary for making a stand, will make him strong and not to be vanquished. This is the meaning of the pictorial statement in ver. 18. A strong city resists the assaults of the foes; the storm cannot shatter an iron pillar; and walls of brass defy the enemy's missiles. Instead of the plural *חֲמוֹת*, the parallel passage xv. 20 has the sing. *חֹמֶת*, the plural being used as frequently as the singular to indicate the wall encircling the city; cf. 2 Kings xxv. 10 with 1 Kings iii. 1, Neh. ii. 13, iv. 1 with i. 3, and ii. 17, iv. 10. With such invincible power will God equip His prophet "against the whole land," *i.e.* so that he will be able to hold his own against the whole land. The mention of the component parts of "all the land," *i.e.* the several classes of the population, is introduced by *לְמַלְכֵי*, so that "the kings," etc., is to be taken as an apposition to "against all the land." Kings in the plural are mentioned, because the prophet's labours are to extend over several reigns. *שָׂרִים* are the chiefs of the people, the heads of families and clans, and officers, civil and military. "The people of the land" is the rest of the population not included in these three classes, elsewhere called men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, xvii. 25, xxxii. 32, and frequently. *עָלֶיךָ* for *אֵלֶיךָ*; so in xv. 20, and often. With the promise in ver. 19*b*, cf. ver. 8.

I.—GENERAL ADMONITIONS AND REPROOFS BELONGING TO THE TIME OF JOSIAH.—CHAP. II.—XXII.

If we compare the six longer discourses in these chapters with the sayings and prophecies gathered together in the other portions of the book, we observe between them this distinction in form and matter, that the former are more *general* in their character than the latter. Considered as to their form, these last prophecies have, with few exceptions, headings in which we are told both the date of their composition and the circumstances under which they were uttered; while in the headings of these six discourses, if we except the somewhat indefinite notice, "in the days of Josiah" (iii. 6), we find nowhere mentioned either their date or the circumstances which led to

their composition. Again, both the shorter sayings and the lengthier prophecies between chap. xxi. and the end of the book are unmistakeably to be looked upon as prophetic addresses, separately rounded off; but the discourses of our first part give us throughout the impression that they are not discourses delivered before the people, but treatises compiled in writing from the oral addresses of the prophet. As to their matter, too, we cannot fail to notice the difference that, whereas from chap. xxi. onwards the king of Babylon is named as the executor of judgment upon Judah and the nations, in the discourses of chap. ii.-xx. the enemies who are to execute judgment are nowhere defined, but are only generally described as a powerful and terrible nation coming from the north. And so, in rebuking the idolatry and the prevailing sins of the people, no reference is made to special contemporary events; but there are introduced to a great extent lengthy general animadversions on their moral degeneracy, and reflections on the vanity of idolatry and the nature of true wisdom. From these facts we infer the probable conclusion that these discourses are but comprehensive summaries of the prophet's labours in the days of Josiah. The probability becomes certainty when we perceive that the matters treated in these discourses are arranged according to their subjects. The first discourse (chap. ii. 1-iii. 5) gives, so to speak, the programme of the subjects of all the following discourses: that disloyal defection to idolatry, with which Israel has from of old requited the Lord for His love and faithfulness, brings with it sore chastening judgments. In the second discourse (chap. iii. 6-vi. 30) faithless Judah is shown, in the fall of the ten tribes, what awaits itself in case of stiff-necked persistence in idolatry. In the third (chap. vii.-x.) is torn from it the support of a vain confidence in the possession of the temple and in the offering of the sacrifices commanded by the law. In the fourth (chap. xi.-xiii.) its sins are characterized as a breach of the covenant; and rejection by the Lord is declared to be its punishment. In the fifth (chap. xiv.-xvii.) the hope is destroyed that the threatened chastisement can be turned aside by intercession. Finally, in the sixth (chap. xviii.-xx.) the judgment of the destruction of Jerusalem and of the kingdom of Judah is exhibited in symbolical acts. In this

arrangement and distribution of what the prophet had to announce to the people in his endeavours to save them, if possible, from destruction, we can recognise a progression from general admonitions and threatenings to more and more definite announcement of coming judgments; and when, on the other hand, we see growing greater and bitterer the prophet's complaints against the hatreds and persecutions he has to endure (cf. xii. 1-6, xv. 10, 11, 15-21, xvii. 14-18, xviii. 18-23, xx.), we can gather that the expectation of the people's being saved from impending destruction was growing less and less, that their obduracy was increasing, and that judgment must inevitably come upon them. These complaints of the prophet cease with chap. xx., though later he had much fiercer hatred to endure.

None of these discourses contains any allusions to events that occurred after Josiah's death, or stand in any relation to such events. Hence we believe we are safe in taking them for a digest of the quintessence of Jeremiah's oral preaching in the days of Josiah, and this arranged with reference to the subject-matter. It was by this preaching that Jeremiah sought to give a firm footing to the king's reformatory efforts to restore and inspire new life into the public worship, and to develope the external return to the legal temple worship into an inward conversion to the living God. And it was thus he sought, while the destruction of the kingdom was impending, to save all that would let themselves be saved; knowing as he did that God, in virtue of His unchangeable covenant faithfulness, would sharply chastise His faithless people for its obstinate apostasy from Him, but had not determined to make an utter end of it.

CHAP. II. 1-III. 5. THE LOVE AND FAITHFULNESS OF THE LORD, AND ISRAEL'S DISLOYALTY AND IDOLATRY.

The Lord has loved Israel sincerely (ii. 2, 3), but Israel has fallen from the Lord its God and followed after imaginary gods (vers. 4-8); therefore He will yet further punish it for this unparalleled sin (vers. 9-19). From of old Israel has been renegade, and has by its idolatry contracted fear-

ful guilt, being led not even by afflictions to return to the Lord (vers. 20-30); therefore must the Lord chastise (vers. 31-37), because they will not repent (iii. 1-5). This discourse is of a quite general character; it only sketches the main thoughts which are extended in the following discourses and prophecies concerning Judah. So that by most critics it is held to be the discourse by which Jeremiah inaugurated his ministry; for, as Hitzig puts it, "in its finished completeness it gives the impression of a first-uttered outpouring of the heart, in which are set forth, without restraint, Jahveh's list of grievances against Israel, which has long been running up." It unquestionably contains the chief of the thoughts uttered by the prophet at the beginning of his ministry.

Vers. 1-3. "And then came to me the word of Jahveh, saying: Go and publish in the ears of Jerusalem, saying: I have remembered to thy account the love of thy youth, the lovingness of thy courtship time, thy going after me in the wilderness, in a land unsown. Holy was Israel to the Lord, his first-fruits of the produce: all who would have devoured him brought guilt upon themselves: evil came upon him, is the saying of Jahveh." The vers. 2 and 3 are not "in a certain sense the text of the following reproof" (Graf), but contain "the main idea which shows the cause of the [following] rebuke" (Hitz.): The Lord has rewarded the people of Israel with blessings for its love to Him. זָכַר with ^ל *pers.* and *accus. rei* means: to remember to one's account that it may stand him in good stead afterwards,—cf. Neh. v. 19, xiii. 22, 31, Ps. xcvi. 3, cvi. 45, etc.,—that it may be repaid with evil, Neh. vi. 14, xiii. 29, Ps. lxxix. 8, etc. The perfect זָכַרְתִּי is to be noted, and not inverted into the present. It is a thing completed that is spoken of; what the Lord has done, not what He is going on with. He remembered to the people Israel the love of its youth. חֶסֶד, ordinarily, condescending love, graciousness and favour; here, the self-devoting, nestling love of Israel to its God. The youth of Israel is the time of the sojourn in Egypt and of the exodus thence (Hos. ii. 17, xi. 1); here the latter, as is shown by the following: lovingness of the courtship. The courtship comprises the time from the exodus out of Egypt till the concluding of the covenant at Sinai (Ex. xix.

8). When the Lord redeemed Israel with a strong hand out of the power of Egypt, He chose it to be His spouse, whom He bare on eagles' wings and brought unto Himself, Ex. xix. 4. The love of the bride to her Lord and Husband, Israel proved by its following Him as He went before in the wilderness, the land where it is not sown, *i.e.* followed Him gladly into the parched, barren wilderness. "Thy going after me" is decisive for the question so much debated by commentators, whether לְאַחֲרָי and לְאַחֲרָי stand for the love of Israel to its God, or God's love to Israel. The latter view we find so early as Chrysostom, and still in Rosenm. and Graf; but it is entirely overthrown by the לְאַחֲרָי אֲחֵרֵי, which Chrysost. transforms into *ποιήσας ἐξακολουθήσαι μου*, while Graf takes no notice of it. The reasons, too, which Graf, after the example of Rosenm. and Dathe, brings in support of this and against the only feasible exposition, are altogether valueless. The assertion that the facts forbid us to understand the words of the love of Israel to the Lord, because history represents the Israelites, when *vixdum Aegypto egressos*, as *refractarios et ad aliorum deorum cultum pronos*, cannot be supported by a reference to Deut. ix. 6, 24, Isa. xlviii. 8, Amos v. 25 f., Ps. cvi. 7. History knows of no apostasy of Israel from its God and no idolatry of the people during the time from the exodus out of Egypt till the arrival at Sinai, and of this time alone Jeremiah speaks. All the rebellions of Israel against its God fall within the time after the conclusion of the covenant at Sinai, and during the march from Sinai to Canaan. On the way from Egypt to Sinai the people murmured repeatedly, indeed, against Moses; at the Red Sea, when Pharaoh was pursuing with chariots and horsemen (Ex. xiv. 11 ff.); at Marah, where they were not able to drink the water for bitterness (xv. 24); in the wilderness of Sin, for lack of bread and meat (xvi. 2 ff.); and at Massah, for want of water (xvii. 2 ff.). But in all these cases the murmuring was no apostasy from the Lord, no rebellion against God, but an outburst of timorousness and want of proper trust in God, as is abundantly clear from the fact that in all these cases of distress and trouble God straightway brings help, with the view of strengthening the confidence of the timorous people in the omnipotence of His helping grace.

Their backsliding from the Lord into heathenism begins with the worship of the golden calf, after the covenant had been entered into at Sinai (Ex. xxxii.), and is continued in the revolts on the way from Sinai to the borders of Canaan, at Taberah, at Kibroth-hattaavah (Num. xi.), in the desert of Paran at Kadesh (Num. xiii., xx.); and each time it was severely punished by the Lord. Neither are we to conclude, with J. D. Mich., that God interprets the journey through the desert *in meliorem partem*, and makes no mention of their offences and revolts; nor with Graf, that Jeremiah looks steadily away from all that history tells of the march of the Israelites through the desert, of their discontent and refractoriness, of the golden calf and of Baal Peor, and, idealizing the past as contrasted with the much darker present, keeps in view only the brighter side of the old times. Idealizing of this sort is found neither elsewhere in Jeremiah nor in any other prophet; nor is there anything of the kind in our verse, if we take up rightly the sense of it and the thread of the thought. It becomes necessary so to view it, only if we hold the whole forty years' sojourn of the Israelites in the wilderness to be the espousal time, and make the marriage union begin not with the covenanting at Sinai, but with the entrance of Israel into Canaan. Yet more entirely without foundation is the other assertion, that the words rightly given as the sense is, "stand in no connection with the following, since then the point in hand is the people's forgetfulness of the divine benefits, its thanklessness and apostasy, not at all the deliverances wrought by Jahveh in consideration of its former devotedness." For in ver. 3 it is plainly enough told how God remembered to the people its love. Israel was so shielded by Him, as His sanctuary, that whoever touched it must pay the penalty. קָדְשׁ are all gifts consecrated to Jahveh. The Lord has made Israel a holy offering consecrated to Him in this, that He has separated it to Himself for a סֶגֶל, for a precious possession, and has chosen it to be a holy people: Ex. xix. 5 f.; Dent. vii. 6, xiv. 2. We can explain from the Torah of offering the further designation of Israel: his first-fruits; the first of the produce of the soil or yield of the land belonged, as קָדְשׁ, to the Lord: Ex. xxiii. 19; Num. viii. 8, etc. Israel, as the chosen people

of God, was such a *consecrated* firstling. Inasmuch as Jahveh is Creator and Lord of the whole world, all the peoples are His possession, the harvest of His creation. But amongst the peoples of the earth He has chosen Israel to Himself for a firstling-people (רֵאשִׁית הָעוֹלָם, Amos vi. 1), and so pronounced it His sanctuary, not to be profaned by touch. Just as each laic who ate of a firstling consecrated to God incurred guilt, so all who meddled with Israel brought guilt upon their heads. The choice of the verb אִכְלִי is also to be explained from the figure of firstling-offerings. The eating of firstling-fruit is appropriation of it to one's own use. Accordingly, by the eating of the holy people of Jahveh, not merely the killing and destroying of it is to be understood, but all laying of violent hands on it, to make it a prey, and so all injury or oppression of Israel by the heathen nations. The practical meaning of יִשְׁמֹי is given by the next clause: mischief came upon them. The verbs יִשְׁמֹי and הִבֵּא are not futures; for we have here to do not with the future, but with what did take place so long as Israel showed the love of the espousal time to Jahveh. Hence rightly Hitz.: "he that would devour it must pay the penalty." An historical proof of this is furnished by the attack of the Amalekites on Israel and its result, Ex. xvii. 8-15.

Vers. 4-8. But Israel did not remain true to its first love; it has forgotten the benefits and blessings of its God, and has fallen away from Him in rebellion.—Ver. 4. "Hear the word of Jahveh, house of Jacob, and all families of the house of Israel. Ver. 5. Thus saith Jahveh, What have your fathers found in me of wrongfulness, that they are gone far from me, and have gone after vanity, and are become vain? Ver. 6. And they said not, Where is Jahveh that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, that led us in the wilderness, in the land of steppes and of pits, in the land of drought and of the shadow of death, in a land that no one passes through and where no man dwells? Ver. 7. And I brought you into a land of fruitful fields, to eat its fruit and its goodness: and ye came and defiled my land, and my heritage ye have made an abomination. Ver. 8. The priests said not, Where is Jahveh? and they that handled the law knew me not: the shepherds fell away from me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal, and after them that

profit not are they gone." The rebuke for ungrateful, faithless apostasy is directed against the whole people. The "house of Jacob" is the people of the twelve tribes, and the parallel member, "all families of the house of Israel," is an elucidative apposition. The "fathers" in ver. 5 are the ancestors of the now living race onwards from the days of the Judges, when the generation arising after the death of Joshua and his contemporaries forsook the Lord and served the Baals (Judg. ii. 10 ff.). עָל, perversity, wrongfulness, used also of a single wicked deed in Ps. vii. 4, the opposite to acting in truth and good faith. Jahveh is a God of faithfulness (אֱמֻנָה); in Him is no iniquity (אֵין עָל), Deut. xxxii. 4. The question, what have they found . . . ? is answered in the negative by ver. 6. To remove far from me and follow after vanity, is tantamount to forsaking Jahveh and serving the false gods (Baals), Judg. ii. 11. הֶבֶל, lit. breath, thence emptiness, vanity, is applied so early as the song of Moses, Deut. xxxii. 21, to the false gods, as being nonentities. Here, however, the word means not the gods, but the worship of them, as being groundless and vain; bringing no return to him who devotes himself to it, but making him foolish and useless in thought and deed. By the apostle in Rom. i. 21 יְהִיבֵל is expressed by ἐματαιώθησαν. Cf. 2 Kings xvii. 15, where the second hemistich of our verse is applied to the ten tribes.—Ver. 6. They said not, Where is Jahveh? i.e. they have no longer taken any thought of Jahveh; have not recalled His benefits, though they owed to Him all they had become and all they possessed. He has brought them out of Egypt, freed them from the house of bondage (Mic. vi. 4), and saved them from the oppression of the Pharaohs, meant to extirpate them (Ex. iii. 7 ff.). He has led them through pathless and inhospitable deserts, miraculously furnished them with bread and water, and protected them from all dangers (Deut. viii. 15). To show the greatness of His benefits, the wilderness is described as parched unfruitful land, as a land of deadly terrors and dangers. אֶרֶץ עֲרָבָה, land of steppes or heaths, corresponds to the land unsown of ver. 2. "And of pits," i.e. full of dangerous pits and chasms into which one may stumble unawares. Land of drought, where one may have to pine through thirst. And of the shadow of death: so Sheol is named in Job

x. 21 as being a place of deep darkness; here, the wilderness, as a land of the terrors of death, which surround the traveller with darkness as of death: Isa. viii. 22, ix. 1; Job xvi. 16. A land through which no one passes, etc., *i.e.* which offers the traveller neither path nor shelter. Through this frightful desert God has brought His people in safety.—Ver 7. And He has done yet more. He has brought them into a fruitful and well-cultivated land. **בְּרִמָּה**, fruitful fields, the opposite of wilderness, chap. iv. 26; Isa. xxix. 17. To eat up its fruit and its good; cf. the enumeration of the fruits and useful products of the land of Canaan, Deut. viii. 7-9. And this rich and splendid land the ungrateful people have defiled by their sins and vices (cf. Lev. xviii. 24), and idolatry (cf. Ezek. xxxvi. 18); and the heritage of Jahveh they have thus made an abomination, an object of horror. The land of Canaan is called "my heritage," the especial domain of Jahveh, inasmuch as, being the Lord of the earth, He is the possessor of the land and has given it to the Israelites for a possession, yet dwells in the midst of it as its real lord, Num. xxv. 34.—In ver. 8 the complaint briefly given in ver. 6 is expanded by an account of the conduct of the higher classes, those who gave its tone to the spirit of the people. The priests, whom God had chosen to be the ministers of His sanctuary, asked not after Him, *i.e.* sought neither Him nor His sanctuary. They who occupy themselves with the law, who administer the law: these too are the priests as teachers of the law (Mic. iii. 11), who should instruct the people as to the Lord's claims on them and commandments (Lev. x. 11; Deut. xxxiii. 10). They knew not Jahveh, *i.e.* they took no note of Him, did not seek to discover what His will and just claims were, so as to instruct the people therein, and press them to keep the law. The shepherds are the civil authorities, princes and kings (cf. xxiii. 1 ff.): those who by their lives set the example to the people, fell away from the Lord; and the prophets, who should have preached God's word, prophesied **בְּבַעַל**, by Baal, *i.e.* inspired by Baal. Baal is here a generic name for all false gods; cf. xxiii. 13. **לֹא יוֹעִיל**, those who profit not, are the Baals as unreal gods; cf. Isa. xlv. 9, 1 Sam. xii. 21. The utterances as to the various ranks form a climax, as Hitz. rightly remarks. The ministers of public

worship manifested no desire towards me ; those learned in the law took no knowledge of me, of my will, of the contents of the book of the law ; the civil powers went the length of rising up against my law ; and the prophets fairly fell away to false gods, took inspiration from Baal, the incarnation of the lying spirit.

Vers. 9-13. Such backsliding from God is unexampled and appalling. Ver. 9. "Therefore will I further contend with you, and with your children's children will I contend. Ver. 10. For go over to the islands of the Chittim, and see; and send to Kedar, and observe well, and see if such things have been ; Ver. 11. whether a nation hath changed its gods, which indeed are no gods? but my people hath changed its glory for that which profits not. Ver. 12. Be horrified, ye heavens, at this, and shudder, and be sore dismayed, saith Jahveh. Ver. 13. For double evil hath my people done ; me have they forsaken, the fountain of living waters, to hew out for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that hold no water." In the preceding verses the fathers were charged with the backsliding from the Lord ; in ver. 9 punishment is threatened against the now-living people of Israel, and on their children's children after them. For the people in its successive and even yet future generations constitutes a unity, and in this unity a moral personality. Since the sins of the fathers transmit themselves to the children and remoter descendants, sons and grandsons must pay the penalty of the fathers' guilt, that is, so long as they share the disposition of their ancestors. The conception of this moral unity is at the foundation of the threatening. That the present race persists in the fathers' backsliding from the Lord is clearly expressed in ver. 17 ff. In "I will further chide or strive," is intimated *implicite* that God had chidden already up till now, or even earlier with the fathers. **וָיִחַד**, contend, when said of God, is actual striving or chastening with all kinds of punishment. This must God do as the righteous and holy one; for the sin of the people is an unheard of sin, seen in no other people. "The islands of the Chittim" are the isles and coast lands of the far west, as in Ezek. xxvii. 6 ; **כִּיְתִים** having originally been the name for Cyprus and the city of *Cition*, see in Gen. x. 4. In contrast with these distant western lands, *Kedar* is

mentioned as representative of the races of the east. The Kedarenes lived as a pastoral people in the eastern part of the desert between Arabia Petræa and Babylonia; see in Gen. xxv. 13 and Ezek. xxvii. 21. Peoples in the two opposite regions of the world are individualizingly mentioned instead of all peoples. הַתְּבוּנָה, give good heed, serves to heighten the expression. הֵן = אֵם introduces the indirect question; cf. Ew. § 324, c. The unheard of, that which has happened amongst no people, is put interrogatively for rhetorical effect. Has any heathen nation changed its gods, which indeed are not truly gods? No; no heathen nation has done this; but the people of Jahveh, Israel, has exchanged its glory, *i.e.* the God who made Himself known to it in His glory, for false gods that are of no profit. כְּבוֹד is the glory in which the invisible God manifested His majesty in the world and amidst His people. Cf. the analogous title given to God, נֶאֱמָן יִשְׂרָאֵל, Amos viii. 7, Hos. v. 5. The exact antithesis to כְּבוֹדוֹ would be בִּשְׁתָּה, cf. iii. 24, xi. 13; but Jeremiah chose לֹא יִזְעִיל to represent the exchange as not advantageous. God showed His glory to the Israelites in the glorious deeds of His omnipotence and grace, like those mentioned in vers. 5 and 6. The Baals, on the other hand, are not אֱלֹהִים, but אֱלִילִים, nothings, phantoms without a being, that bring no help or profit to their worshippers. Before the sin of Israel is more fully set forth, the prophet calls on heaven to be appalled at it. The heavens are addressed as that part of the creation where the glory of God is most brightly reflected. The rhetorical aim is seen in the piling up of words. חָרֵב, lit. to be parched up, to be deprived of the life-marrow. Israel has committed two crimes: *a.* It has forsaken Jahveh, the fountain of living water. מַיִם חַיִּים, living water, *i.e.* water that originates and nourishes life, is a significant figure for God, with whom is the fountain of life (Ps. xxxvi. 10), *i.e.* from whose Spirit all life comes. Fountain of living water (here and xvii. 13) is synonymous with well of life in Prov. x. 11, xiii. 14, xiv. 27, Sir. xxi. 13. *b.* The other sin is this, that they hew or dig out wells, broken, rent, full of crevices, that hold no water. The delineation keeps to the same figure. The dead gods have no life and can dispense no life, just as wells with rents or fissures hold no water. The two sins, the forsaking of the living God and the seeking out

of dead gods, cannot really be separated. Man, created by God and for God, cannot live without God. If he forsakes the living God, he passes in spite of himself into the service of dead, unreal gods. Forsaking the living God is *eo ipso* exchanging Him for an imaginary god. The prophet sets the two moments of the apostasy from God side by side, so as to depict to the people with greater fulness of light the enormity of their crime. The fact in ver. 11 that no heathen nation changes its gods for others, has its foundation in this, that the gods of the heathen are the creations of men, and that the worship of them is moulded by the carnal-mindedness of sinful man; so that there is less inducement to change, the gods of the different nations being in nature alike. But the true God claims to be worshipped in spirit and in truth, and does not permit the nature and manner of His worship to depend on the fancies of His worshippers; He makes demands upon men that run counter to carnal nature, insisting upon the renunciation of sensual lusts and cravings and the crucifixion of the flesh, and against this corrupt carnal nature rebels. Upon this reason for the fact adduced, Jeremiah does not dwell, but lays stress on the fact itself. This he does with the view of bringing out the distinction, wide as heaven, between the true God and the false gods, to the shaming of the idolatrous people; and in order, at the same time, to scourge the folly of idolatry by giving prominence to the contrast between the glory of God and the nothingness of the idols.

Vers. 14–19. By this double sin Israel has drawn on its own head all the evil that has befallen it. Nevertheless it will not cease its intriguing with the heathen nations. Ver. 14. “Is Israel a servant? is he a home-born slave? why is he become a booty? Ver. 15. Against him roared the young lions, let their voice be heard, and made his land a waste; his cities were burnt up void of inhabitants. Ver. 16. Also the sons of Noph and Tahpanes feed on the crown of thy head. Ver. 17. Does not this bring it upon thee, thy forsaking Jahveh thy God, at the time when He led thee on the way? Ver. 18. And now what hast thou to do with the way to Egypt, to drink the waters of the Nile? and what with the way to Assur, to drink the waters of the river? Ver. 19. Thy wickedness

chastises thee, and thy backslidings punish thee; then know and see that it is evil and bitter to forsake Jahveh thy God, and to have no fear of me, saith the Lord Jahveh of hosts." The thought from vers. 14-16 is this: Israel was plundered and abused by the nations like a slave. To characterize such a fate as in direct contradiction to its destiny is the aim of the question: Is Israel a servant? *i.e.* a slave or a house-born serf. עֶבֶד is he who has in any way fallen into slavery, יָלִיד בֵּית is a slave born in the house of his master. The distinction between these two classes of slaves does not consist in the superior value of the servant born in the house by reason of his attachment to the house. This peculiarity is not here thought of, but only the circumstance that the son of a slave, born in the house, remained a slave without any prospect of being set free; while the man who has been forced into slavery by one of the vicissitudes of life might hope again to acquire his freedom by some favourable turn of circumstances. Another failure is the attempt of Hitz. to interpret עֶבֶד as servant of Jahveh, worshipper of the true God; for this interpretation, even if we take no account of all the other arguments that make against it, is rendered impossible by יָלִיד בֵּית. That expression never means the son of the house, but by unfailing usage the slave born in the house of his master. Now the people of Israel had not been born as serf in the land of Jahveh, but had become עֶבֶד, *i.e.* slave, in Egypt (Deut. v. 15); but Jahveh has redeemed it from this bondage and made it His people. The questions suppose a state of affairs that did not exist. This is shown by the next question, one expressing wonder: Why then is he [it] become a prey? Slaves are treated as a prey, but Israel was no slave; why then has such treatment fallen to his lot? *Propheta per admirationem quasi de re nova et absurda sciscitatur. An servus est Israel? atqui erat liber præ cunctis gentibus, erat enim filius primogenitus Dei; necesse est igitur quærere aliam causam, cur adeo miser sit* (Calv.). Cf. the similar turn of the thought in ver. 31. How Israel became a prey is shown in vers. 15 and 16. These verses do not treat of future events, but of what has already happened, and, according to vers. 18 and 19, will still continue. The imperf. יִשָּׁאֵנִי and יִרְעִיקֵנִי alternate consequently with the perf. נָצַחַתָּה and נָתַתָּנִי.

and are governed by *לָבוּ הָיָה*, so that they are utterances regarding events of the past, which have been and are still repeated. Lions are a figure that frequently stands for enemies thirsting for plunder, who burst in upon a people or land; cf. Mic. v. 7, Isa. v. 29, etc. Roared *עָלָיו*, against him, not, over him: the lion roars when he is about to rush upon his prey, Amos iii. 4, 8; Ps. civ. 21; Judg. xiv. 5; when he has pounced upon it he growls or grumbles over it; cf. Isa. xxxi. 4.—In ver. 15*b* the figurative manner passes into plain statement. They made his land a waste; cf. iv. 7, xviii. 16, etc., where instead of *שָׁמָּה* we have the more ordinary *שָׁמָּה*. The Cheth. *נִצְתָה* from *נִצַּח*, not from the Ethiop. *נִצַּח* (Graf, Hitz.), is to be retained; the Keri here, as in xxii. 6, is an unnecessary correction; cf. Ew. § 317, *a*. In this delineation Jeremiah has in his eye chiefly the land of the ten tribes, which had been ravaged and depopulated by the Assyrians, even although Judah had often suffered partial devastations by enemies; cf. 1 Kings xiv. 25.—Ver. 16. Israel has had to submit to spoliation at the hands of the Egyptians too. The present reference to the Egyptians is explained by the circumstances of the prophet's times,—from the fact, namely, that just as Israel and Judah had sought the help of Egypt against the Assyrians (cf. Hos. vii. 11, 2 Kings xvii. 4, and Isa. xxx. 1–5, xxx. 1) in the time of Hezekiah, so now in Jeremiah's times Judah was expecting and seeking help from the same quarter against the advancing power of the Chaldeans; cf. xxxvii. 7. Noph and Tahpanes are two former capitals of Egypt, here put as representing the kingdom of the Pharaohs. *נֹפִי*, in Hos. ix. 6 *נֹפִי* contracted from *מִנֹּפִי*, *Manoph* or *Menoph*, is *Memphis*, the old metropolis of Lower Egypt, made by Psammetichus the capital of the whole kingdom. Its ruins lie on the western bank of the Nile, to the south of Old Cairo, close by the present village of *Mitrahenny*, which is built amongst the ruins; cf. Brugsch *Reiseberichte aus Egypten*, § 60 ff., and the remarks on Hos. ix. 6 and Isa. xix. 13. *תַּחְפָּנֵס*, elsewhere spelt as here in the Keri *תַּחְפָּנֵס*,—cf. xliii. 7 ff., xlv. 1, xlvi. 14, Ez. xxx. 18,—was a strong border city on the Pelusiatic arm of the Nile, called by the Greeks *Δάφναι* (Herod. ii. 20), by the LXX. *Τάφναι*; see in Ezek. xxx. 18. A part of the Jews who had

remained in the land fled hither after the destruction of Jerusalem, xliii. 7 ff. יִרְעֶקָה קִרְיָהּ, feed upon thy crown (lit. feed on thee in respect of thy crown), is a trope for ignominious devastation; for to shave one bald is a token of disgrace and sorrow, cf. xlvii. 5, xlviii. 37, Isa. iii. 17; and with this Israel is threatened in Isa. vii. 20. יִרְעָה, to eat up by grazing, as in Job xx. 26 and xxiv. 21; in the latter passage in the sense of *depopulari*. We must then reject the conjectures of J. D. Mich., Hitz., and others, suggesting the sense: crush thy head for thee; a sense not at all suitable, since crushing the head would signify the utter destruction of Israel.—The land of Israel is personified as a woman, as is shown by the fem. suffix in יִרְעֶקָה. Like a land closely cropped by herds, so is Israel by the Egyptians. In vi. 3 also the enemies are represented as shepherds coming with their flocks against Jerusalem, and pitching their tents round about the city, while each flock crops its portion of ground. In xii. 10 shepherds lay the vineyard waste.

In ver. 17 the question as to the cause of the evil is answered. זֶה is the above-mentioned evil, that Israel had become a prey to the foe. This thy forsaking of Jahveh makes or prepares for thee. הִתְעַשָּׂה is neuter; the infin. עָזָבָהּ is the subject of the clause, and it is construed as a neuter, as in 1 Sam. xviii. 23. The fact that thou hast forsaken Jahveh thy God has brought this evil on thee. At the time when He led thee on the way. The participle מוֹלִיךְ is subordinated to עָה in the *stat. constr.* as a *partic.* standing for the *præterit. durans*; cf. Ew. § 337, c. בִּדְרֶךְ is understood by Ros. and Hitz. of the right way (Ps. xxv. 8); but in this they forget that this acceptance is incompatible with the בָּעֵת, which circumscribes the leading within a definite time. God will lead His people on the right way at all times. The way on which He led them at the particular time is the way through the Arabian desert, cf. ver. 6, and בִּדְרֶךְ is to be understood as in Deut. i. 33, Ex. xviii. 8, xxiii. 20, etc. Even thus early their fathers forsook the Lord: at Sinai, by the worship of the golden calf; then when the people rose against Moses and Aaron in the desert of Paran, called a rejecting (יָצָא) of Jahveh in Num. xiv. 11; and at Shittim, where Israel joined himself to Baal Peor, Num. xxv. 1-3. The forsaking of

Jahveh is not to be limited to direct idolatry, but comprehends also the seeking of help from the heathen; this is shown by the following 18th verse, in which the reproaches are extended to the present bearing of the people. 'מִהֲלָךְ לְרֶגֶךָ וְגו', lit. what is to thee in reference to the way of Egypt (for the expression, see Hos. xiv. 9), *i.e.* what hast thou to do with the way of Egypt? Why dost thou arise to go into Egypt, to drink the water of the Nile? 'שְׁחֹר', the black, turbid stream, is a name for the Nile, taken from its dark-grey or black mud. The Nile is the life-giving artery of Egypt, on whose fertilizing waters the fruitfulness and the prosperity of the country depend. To drink the waters of the Nile is as much as to say to procure for oneself the sources of Egypt's life, to make the power of Egypt nseful to oneself. Analogous to this is the drinking the waters of the river, *i.e.* the Euphrates. What is meant is seeking help from Egyptians and Assyrians. The water of the Nile and of the Euphrates was to be made to furnish them with that which the fountain of living water, *i.e.* Jahveh (ver. 14), supplied to them. This is an old sin, and with it Israel of the ten tribes is upbraided by Hosea (vii. 11, xii. 2). From this we are not to infer "that here we have nothing to do with the present, since the existing Israel, Judah, was surely no longer a suitor for the assistance of Assyria, already grown powerless" (Hitz.). The limitation of the reproach solely to the past is irreconcilable with the terms of the verse and with the context (ver. 19). 'מִהֲלָךְ לְרֶגֶךָ' cannot grammatically be translated: What hadst thou to do with the way; just as little can we make 'תִּיפְרָה' hath chastised thee, since the following: know and see, is then utterly unsuitable to it. 'תִּיפְרָה' and 'תִּבְיָהּ' are not futures, but imperfects, *i.e.* expressing what is wont to happen over again in each similar case; and so to be expressed in English by the present: thy wickedness, *i.e.* thy wicked work, chastises thee. The wickedness was shown in forsaking Jahveh, in the 'מִשְׁבֹּת', backslidings, the repeated defection from the living God; cf. iii. 22, v. 6, xiv. 7. As to the fact, we have no historical evidence that under Josiah political alliance with Egypt or Assyria was compassed; but even if no formal negotiations took place, the country was certainly even then not without a party to build its hopes on one or other of

the great powers between which Judah lay, whenever a conflict arose with either of them.—וְרָעִי, with the Vav of consecution (see Ew. § 347, a) : Know then, and at last comprehend, that forsaking the Lord thy God is evil and bitter, *i.e.* bears evil and bitter fruit, prepares bitter misery for thee. “To have no fear of me” corresponds “to forsake,” *lit.* thy forsaking, as second subject; *lit.* : and the no fear of me in thee, *i.e.* the fact that thou hast no awe of me. בְּתַדְתִּי, awe of me, like בְּתַדְתִּי in Deut. ii. 25.

Vers. 20-25. All along Israel has been refractory; it cannot and will not cease from idolatry. Ver. 20. For of old time thou hast broken thy yoke, torn off thy bands; and hast said : I will not serve; but upon every high hill, and under every green tree, thou stretchedst thyself as a harlot. Ver. 21. And I have planted thee a noble vine, all of genuine stock : and how hast thou changed thyself to me into the bastards of a strange vine? Ver. 22. Even though thou washedst thee with natron and tookest much soap, filthily remains thy guilt before me, saith the Lord Jahveh. Ver. 23. How canst thou say, I have not defiled me, after the Baals have I not gone? See thy way in the valley, know what thou hast done—thou lightfooted camel filly, entangling her ways. Ver. 24. A wild she-ass used to the wilderness, that in her lust panteth for air; her heat, who shall restrain it? all that seek her run themselves weary; in her month they will find her. Ver. 25. Keep thy foot from going barefoot, and thy throat from thirst; but thou sayest, It is useless; no; for I have loved strangers, and after them I go.” Ver. 20. מִעוֹלָם, from eternity, *i.e.* from immemorial antiquity, has Israel broken the yoke of the divine law laid on it, and torn asunder the bands of decency and order which the commands of God, the ordinances of the Torah, put on, to nurture it to be a holy people of the Lord; torn them as an untamed bullock (xxx. 18) or a stubborn cow, Hos. iv. 16. מוֹסְרוֹת, bands, are not the bands or cords of love with which God drew Israel, Hos. xi. 4 (Graf), but the commands of God whose part it was to keep life within the bounds of purity, and to hold the people back from running riot in idolatry. On this head see v. 5; and for the expression, Ps. ii. 3. The Masoretes have taken שְׁבַרְתִּי and נִתְקַתִּי for the 1st person,

pointing accordingly, and for אָנְעִבּוֹר, as unsuitable to this, they have substituted אָנְעִבּוֹר. Ewald has decided in favour of these readings; but he is thus compelled to tear the verse to pieces and to hold the text to be defective, since the words from וְהָאֲמָרִי onwards are not in keeping with what precedes. Even if we translate: I offend [transgress] not, the thought does not adapt itself well to the preceding; I have of old time broken thy yoke, etc.; nor can we easily reconcile with it the grounding clause; for on every high hill, . . . thou layest a whoring, where Ew. is compelled to force on הִי the adversative sig. Most commentators, following the example of the LXX. and Vulg., have taken the two verbs for 2d person; and thus is maintained the simple and natural thought that Israel has broken the yoke laid on it by God, renounced allegiance to Him, and practised idolatry on every hand. The spelling שָׁבַרְתִּי, נִתְקַחְתִּי, i.e. the formation of the 2d pers. perf. with י, is frequently found in Jer.; cf. v. 33, iii. 4, iv. 19, xiii. 21, etc. It is really the fuller original spelling הִי which has been preserved in Aramaic, though seldom found in Hebrew; in Jer. it must be accounted an Aramaism; cf. Ew. § 190, c; Gesen. § 44, 2, Rem. 4. With the last clause, on every high hill, etc., cf. Hos. iv. 13 and Ezek. vi. 13 with the comm. on Deut. xii. 2. Stretchest thyself as a harlot or a whoring, is a vivid description of idolatry. אָצַע, bend oneself, lie down *ad coitum*, like κατακλίνεσθαι, *inclinari*.—Ver. 21. In this whoring with the false gods, Israel shows its utter corruption. I have planted thee a noble vine; not, with noble vines, as we translate in Isa. v. 2, where Israel is compared to a vineyard. Here Israel is compared to the vine itself, a vine which Jahveh has planted; cf. Ps. lxxx. 9, Hos. x. 1. This vine was all (כֻּלָּהּ, in its entirety, referred to שֹׁרֵק, as *collect.*) genuine seed; a proper shoot which could bear good grapes (cf. Ezek. xvii. 5); children of Abraham, as they are described in Gen. xviii. 19. But how has this Israel changed itself to me (לִי, *dativ. incommodi*) into bastards! סִיחִי is *accus.*, dependent on נִתְקַחְתִּי; for this constr. cf. Lev. xiii. 25, Ps. cxiv. 8. סִיחִים sig. not shoots or twigs, but degenerate sprouts or suckers. The article in הַנֶּחֱלֵץ is generic: wild shoots of the species of the wild vine; but this is not the first determining word; cf. for

this exposition of the article xiii. 4, 2 Sam. xii. 30, etc., Ew. § 290, *a*³); and for the omission of the article with נִכְרִיָּה, cf. Ew. § 293, *a*. Thus are removed the grammatical difficulties that led Hitz. to take סִרְי וְנִי quite unnaturally as vocative, and Graf to alter the text. "A strange vine" is an interloping vine, not of the true, genuine stock planted by Jahveh (ver. 10), and which bears poisonous berries of gall, Deut. xxxii. 32.—Ver. 22. Though thou adoptedst the most powerful means of purification, yet couldst thou not purify thyself from the defilement of thy sins. נָתַר, natron, is mineral, and בְּרִיָּה vegetable alkali. נִכְרִיָּה introduces the apodosis; and by the participle a lasting condition is expressed. This word, occurring only here in the O. T., sig. in Aram. to be stained, filthy, a sense here very suitable. לְפָנַי, before me, i.e. before my eyes, the defilement of thy sins cannot be wiped out. On this head see Isa. i. 18, Ps. li. 4, 9.—Ver. 23. And yet Judah professes to be pure and upright before God. This plea Jeremiah meets by pointing to the open practising of idolatrous worship. The people of Judah personified as a woman—זֹנֶה in ver. 20—is addressed. אֵיךְ is a question expressing astonishment. נִרְמָאָה, of defilement by idolatry, as is shown by the next explanatory clause: the Baals I have not followed. בְּעֵלִים is used generically for strange gods, i. 16. The public worship of Baal had been practised in the kingdom of Judah under Joram, Ahaziah, and Athaliah only, and had been extirpated by Jehu, 2 Kings x. 18 ff. Idolatry became again rampant under Ahaz (by his instigation), Manasseh, and Amon, and in the first year of Josiah's reign. Josiah began to restore the worship of Jahveh in the twelfth year of his reign; but it was not till the eighteenth that he was able to complete the reformation of the public services. There is then no difficulty in the way of our assuming that there was yet public worship of idols in Judah during the first five years of Jeremiah's labours. We must not, however, refer the prophet's words to this alone. The following of Baal by the people was not put an end to when the altars and images were demolished; for this was sufficient neither to banish from the hearts of the people the proneness to idolatry, nor utterly to suppress the secret practising of it. The answer to the protestation of the people, blinded in self-righteousness, shows,

further, that the grosser publicly practised forms had not yet disappeared. "See thy way in the valley." Way, *i.e.* doing and practising. בְּנֵי with the article must be some valley known for superstitions cultivated there; most commentators suggest rightly the valley of *Ben* or *Bne-Hinnom* to the south of Jerusalem, where children were offered to Moloch; see on vii. 31. The next words, "and know what thou hast done," do not, taken by themselves, imply that this form of idol-worship was yet to be met with, but only that the people had not yet purified themselves from it. If, however, we take them in connection with what follows, they certainly do imply the continued existence of practices of that sort. The prophet remonstrates with the people for its passionate devotion to idolatry by comparing it to irrational animals, which in their season of heat yield themselves to their instinct. The comparison gains in pointedness by his addressing the people as a camel-filly and a wild she-ass. בְּכֹרֶה ק' is vocative, co-ordinate with the subject of address, and means the young filly of the camel. קָלָה, running lightly, nimbly, swiftly. מְשַׁרְבֵּת רַר, intertwining, *i.e.* crossing her ways; rushing right and left on the paths during the season of heat. Thus Israel ran now after one god, now after another, deviating to the right and to the left from the path prescribed by the law, Dent. xxviii. 14. To delineate yet more sharply the unruly passionateness with which the people rioted in idolatry, there is added the figure of a wild ass running herself weary in her heat. Hitz. holds the comparison to be so managed that the figure of the she-camel is adhered to, and that this creature is compared to a wild ass only in respect of its panting for air. But this view could be well founded only if the *Keri* נִפְשָׁה were the original reading. Then we might read the words thus: (like) a wild ass used to the wilderness she (the she-camel) pants in the heat of her soul for air. But this is incompatible with the *Cheth* נִפְשֵׁי, since the suffix points back to פָּרָה, and requires נִפְשֵׁי to be joined with פָּרָה, so that שֶׁאֵצְפָה must be spoken of the latter. Besides, taken on its own account, it is a very unnatural hypothesis that the behaviour of the she-camel should be itself compared to the gasping of the wild ass for breath; for the camel is only a figure of the people, and ver. 24 is meant to exhibit the un-

bridled ardour, not of the camel, but of the people. So that with the rest of the comm. we take the wild ass to be a second figure for the people. פָּרָה differs only orthographically from פָּרָא, the usual form of the word, and which many codd. have here. This is the wood ass, or rather wild ass, since the creature lives on steppes, not in woods. It is of a yellowish colour, with a white belly, and forms a kind of link between the deer species and the ass; by reason of its arrow-like speed not easily caught, and untameable. Thus it is used as an emblem of boundless love of freedom, Gen. xvi. 12, and of unbridled licentiousness, see on Job xxiv. 5 and xxxix. 5. פָּרָה as *nom. epicæn.* has the adj. next it, לָמַד, in the masc., and so too in the apposition בָּאֵת נִפְשִׁי; the fem. appears first in the statement as to its behaviour, שָׁאֲפָה: she pants for air to cool the glow of heat within. תִּאֲנֶה sig. neither copulation, from אָנָה, approach (Dietr.), nor *æstus libidinosus* (Schroed., Ros.). The sig. approach, meet, attributed to אָנָה, Dietr. grounds upon the Ags. *gelimpan*, to be convenient, opportune; and the sig. glow is derived from the fact that אָנִי is used of the boiling of water. The root meaning of אָנָה, אָנִי, is, according to Fleischer, *tempestivus fuit*, and the root indicates generally any effort after the attainment of the aim of a thing, or impulse; from which come all the meanings ascribed to the word, and for תִּאֲנֶה in the text before us the sig. heat, *i.e.* the animal instinct impelling to the satisfaction of sexual cravings.

In ver. 24b בְּחֹדֶשָׁה is variously interpreted. Thus much is beyond all doubt, that the words are still a part of the figure, *i.e.* of the comparison between the idolatrous people and the wild ass. The use of the 3d person stands in the way of the direct reference of the words to Israel, since in what precedes and in what follows Israel is addressed (in 2d pers.). חֹדֶשׁ can thus mean neither the new moon as a feast (L. de Dieu, Chr. B. Mich.), still less *tempus menstruum* (Jerome, etc.), but month; and the suffix in חֹדֶשָׁה is to be referred, not with Hitz. to תִּאֲנֶה, but to פָּרָה. The suffixes in מִבְּקִשֶׁיהָ and יִמְצְאוּנָה absolutely demand this. "Her month" is the month appointed for the gratification of the wild ass's natural impulse, *i.e.*, as Bochart rightly explains it (*Hieroz.* ii. p. 230, ed. Ros.), *mensis quo*

solent sylvestres asinæ maris appetitu fervere. The meaning of the comparison is this: the false gods do not need anxiously to court the favour of the people; in its unbridled desires it gives itself up to them; cf. iii. 2, Hos. ii. 7, 15. With this is suitably coupled the warning of ver. 25: hold back, *i.e.* keep thy foot from getting bare (יָחַף is subst. not adjective, which would have had to be fem., since רַגְלָא is fem.), and thy throat from thirst, viz. by reason of the fever of running after the idols. This admonition God addresses by the prophet to the people. It is not to wear the sandals off its feet by running after amours, nor so to heat its throat as to become thirsty. Hitz. proposes unsuitably, because in the face of the context, to connect the going barefoot with the visiting of the sanctuary, and the thirsting of the throat (1 Kings xviii. 26) with incessant calling on the gods. The answer of the people to this admonition shows clearly that it has been receiving an advice against running after the gods. The *Chet.* וַיִּרְוּךָ is evidently a copyist's error for וַיִּרְוֶנָּה. The people replies: נִוְאָשׁ, *desperatum (est)*, *i.e.* hopeless; thy advice is all in vain; cf. xviii. 12, and on Isa. lvii. 10. The meaning is made clearer by לֹא: no; for I love the aliens, etc. אֱלֹהֵי נָכַר are not merely strange gods, but also strange peoples. Although idolatry is the matter chiefly in hand, yet it was so bound up with intriguing for the favour of the heathen nations that we cannot exclude from the words some reference to this also.

Vers. 26-28. And yet idolatry brings to the people only disgrace, giving no help in the time of need. Ver. 26. "As a thief is shamed when he is taken, so is the house of Israel put to shame; they, their kings, their princes, their priests, and their prophets. Ver. 27. Because they say to the wood, Thou art my father; and to the stone, Thou hast borne me: for they have turned to me the back and not the face; but in the time of their trouble they say, Arise, and help us. Ver. 28. Where then are thy gods that thou hast made thee? let them arise, if they can help thee in the time of thy trouble; for as many as are thy cities, so many are thy gods, Judah." The thought in vers. 26 and 27a is this, Israel reaps from its idolatry but shame, as the thief from stealing when he is caught in the act. The comparison in ver. 26 contains a universal truth of force at all times. The perf. הוֹבִישׁוּ is the timeless ex-

pression of certainty (Hitz.), and refers to the past as well as to the future. Just as already in past time, so also in the future, idolatry brings but shame and confusion by the frustration of the hopes placed in the false gods. The "house of Israel" is all Israel collectively, and not merely the kingdom of the ten tribes. To give the greater emphasis to the reproaches, the leading ranks are mentioned one by one. אֲמָרִים, not : who say, but because (since) they say to the wood, etc., *i.e.* because they hold images of wood and stone for the gods to whom they owe life and being; whereas Jahveh alone is their Creator or Father and Genitor, Deut. xxxii. 6, 18; Isa. lxiv. 7; Mal. ii. 10. אִמָּן is fem., and thus is put for mother. The *Keri* יִלְדָתִי is suggested solely by the preceding אֲמָרִים, while the *Chet.* is correct, and is to be read יִלְדָתִי, inasmuch as each one severally speaks thus.—With "for they have turned" follows the reason of the statement that Israel will reap only shame from its idolatry. To the living God who has power to help them they turn their back; but when distress comes upon them they cry to Him for help (קִימָה וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנִי as in Ps. iii. 8). But then God will send the people to their gods (idols); then will it discover they will not help, for all so great as their number is. The last clause of ver. 28 runs literally: the number of thy cities are thy gods become, *i.e.* so great is the number of thy gods; cf. xi. 13. Judah is here directly addressed, so that the people of Judah may not take for granted that what has been said is of force for the ten tribes only. On the contrary, Judah will experience the same as Israel of the ten tribes did when disaster broke over it.

Vers. 29-37. Judah has refused to let itself be turned from idolatry either by judgments or by the warnings of the prophets; nevertheless it holds itself guiltless, and believes itself able to turn aside judgment by means of its intrigues with Egypt. Ver. 29. "Wherefore contend ye against me? ye are all fallen away from me, saith Jahveh. Ver. 30. In vain have I smitten your sons; correction have they not taken: your sword hath devoured your prophets, like a devouring lion. Ver. 31. O race that ye are, mark the word of Jahveh. Was I a wilderness to Israel, or a land of dread darkness? Why saith my people, We wander about, come no more to thee? Ver. 32.

Does a maiden forget her ornaments, a bride her girdle? but my people hath forgotten me days without number. Ver. 33. How finely thou trimmest thy ways to seek love! therefore to misdeeds thou accustomest thy ways. Ver. 34. Even in thy skirts is found the blood of the souls of the innocent poor ones; not at housebreaking hast thou caught them, but by reason of all this. Ver. 35. And thou sayest, I am innocent, yea His wrath hath turned from me: behold, I will plead at law with thee for that thou hast said, I have not sinned. Ver. 36. Why runnest thou so hard to change thy way? for Egypt too thou shalt come to shame, as thou wast put to shame for Asshur. Ver. 37. From this also shalt thou come forth, beating thy hands upon thy head; for Jahveh rejecteth those in whom thou trustest, and thou shalt not prosper with them." The question in ver. 29, Wherefore contend ye against me? implies that the people contended with God as to His visitations, murmured at the divine chastisements they had met with; not as to the reproaches addressed to them on account of their idolatry (Hitz., Graf). לָקַח with אֵל, contend, dispute against, is used of the murmuring of men against divine visitations, xii. 1, Job xxxiii. 13. Judah has no ground for discontent with the Lord; for they have all fallen away from Him, and (ver. 31) let themselves be turned to repentance neither by afflictions, nor by warnings, nor by God's goodness to them. לָשׁוּן, to vanity, i.e. without effect, or in vain. Hitz. and Graf wish to refer "your sons" to the able-bodied youth who had at different times been slain by Jahveh in war. The LXX. seem to have taken it thus, expressing לָקַח by ἐδέξασθε; for the third pers. of the verb will not agree with this acceptation of "your sons," since the reproach of not having taken correction could not apply to such as had fallen in war, but only to those who had escaped. This view is unquestionably incorrect, because, as Hitz. admits, the subject, those addressed in לָקַח, must be the people. Hence it follows of necessity that in בְּנֵיכֶם too the people is meant. The expression is similar to בְּנֵי עַמֶּךָ, Lev. xix. 18, and is used for the members of the nation, those who constitute the people; or rather it is like בְּנֵי יְהוּדָה, Joel iv. 6, where Judah is looked on by the prophet as a unity, where sons are the members of the people. הָקָה, too, is not to be limited

to those smitten or slain in war. It is used of all the judgments with which God visits His people, of sword, pestilence, famine, failure of crops, drought, and of all kinds of diseases; cf. Lev. xxvi. 24 ff., Deut. xxviii. 22, 27 ff. מוֹסֵר is instruction by word and by warning, as well as correction by chastisement. Most comm. take the not receiving of correction to refer to divine punitive visitations, and to mean refusal to amend after such warning; Ros., on the other hand, holds the reference to be to the warnings and reproofs of the prophets (מוֹסֵר *hic instructionem valet, ut* Prov. v. 12, 23 *et.*). But both these references are one-sided. If we refer "correction have they not taken" to divine chastisement by means of judgments, there will be no connection between this and the following clause: your sword devoured your prophets; and we are hindered from restraining the reference wholly to the admonitions and rebukes of the prophets by the close connection of the words with the first part of the verse, a connection indicated by the omission of all particles of transition. We must combine the two references, and understand מוֹסֵר both of the rebukes or warnings of the prophets and of the chastisements of God, holding at the same time that it was the correction of the people by the prophets that Jer. here chiefly kept in view. In administering this correction the prophets not only applied to the hearts of the people as judgments from God all the ills that fell upon them, but declared to the stiff-necked sinners the punishments of God, and by their words showed those punishments to be impending: e.g. Elijah, 1 Kings xvii. and xviii., 2 Kings i. 9 ff.; Elisha, 2 Kings ii. 23; the prophet at Bethel, 1 Kings xiii. 4. Thus this portion of the verse acquires a meaning for itself, which simplifies the transition from the first to the third clause, and we gain the following thought: I visited you with punishments, and made you to be instructed and reprov'd by prophets, but ye have slain the prophets who were sent to you. Nehemiah puts it so in ix. 26; but Jeremiah uses a much stronger expression, Your sword devoured your prophets like a lion which destroys, in order to set full before the sinners' eyes the savage hatred of the idolatrous people against the prophets of God. Historical examples of this are furnished by 1 Kings xviii. 4, 13, xix. 10, 2 Chron. xxiv. 21 ff., 2 Kings xxi. 16,

Jer. xxvi. 23. The prophet's indignation grows hotter as he brings into view God's treatment of the apostate race, and sets before it, to its shame, the divine long-suffering and love. **הָרֹר** **אַתֶּם**, O generation ye! English: O generation that ye are! (cf. Ew. § 327, a), is the cry of indignation; cf. Deut. xxxii. 5, where Moses calls the people a perverse foolish generation. **רְאוּ**: see, observe, give heed to the word of the Lord. This verb is often used of perceptions by any sense, as expressive of that sense by which men apprehend most of the things belonging to the outward world. Have I been for Israel a wilderness, *i.e.* an unfruitful soil, offering neither means of support nor shelter? This question contains a litotes, and is as much as to say: have not I richly blessed Israel with earthly goods? Or a land of dread darkness? **מְאֻפֵּלָה**, lit. a darkness sent by Jahveh; cf. the analogous form **שְׁלֵחַ בְּתִיָּה**, Cant. viii. 6.¹ The desert is so called not merely because it is pathless (Job iii. 23), but as a land in which the traveller is on all sides surrounded by deadly dangers; cf. ver. 6 and Ps. lv. 5. Why then will His people insist on being quit of Him? We roam about unfettered (as to **רֹר**, see on Hos. xii. 1), *i.e.* we will no longer bear the yoke of His law; cf. ver. 20. By a comparison breathing love and longing sadness, the prophet seeks to bring home to the heart of the people a feeling of the unnaturalness of their behaviour towards the Lord their God. Does a bride, then, forget her ornaments? etc. **קֶשֶׁרִים**, found besides in Isa. iii. 20, is the ornamental girdle with which the bride adorns herself on the wedding-day; cf. Isa. iii. 20 with xlix. 18. God is His people's best adornment; to Him it owes all the precious possessions it has. It should keep fast hold of Him as its most priceless treasure, should prize Him more highly than the virgin her jewels, than the bride her girdle. But instead of this it has forgotten its God, and that not for a brief time, but throughout

¹ Ewald, *Gram.* § 270, c, proposes to read with the LXX. **מְאֻפֵּלָה**, because (he says) it is nowhere possible, at least not in the language of the prophets, for the name *Jah* (God) to express merely greatness. But this is not to the point. Although a darkness sent by *Jah* be a great darkness, it by no means follows that the name *Jah* is used merely to express greatness. But by **תִּרְדַּמַּת יְהוָה**, 1 Sam. xxvi. 12, it is put beyond a doubt that darkness of *Jah* means a darkness sent or spread out by *Jah*.

countless days. יָמִים is accus. of duration of time. Jeremiah uses this figure besides, as Calv. observed, to pave the way for what comes next. *Volebat enim Judæos conferre mulieribus adulteris, quæ dum feruntur effreni sua libidine, rapiuntur post suos vagos amores.*

In ver. 33 the style of address is ironical. How good thou makest thy way! i.e. how well thou knowest to choose out and follow the right way to seek love. הִיטִיב דְּרָכָךְ sig. usually: strive after a good walk and conversation; cf. vii. 3, 5, xviii. 11, etc.; here, on the other hand, to take the right way for gaining the end in view. "Love" here is seen from the context to be love to the idols, intrigues with the heathen and their gods. Seek love = strive to gain the love of the false gods. To attain this end thou hast taught thy ways misdeeds, i.e. accustomed thy ways to misdeeds, forsaken the commandments of thy God which demand righteousness and the purifying of one's life, and accommodated thyself to the *immoral* practices of the heathen. הָרָעוֹת, with the article as in iii. 5, the evil deeds which are undisguisedly visible; not: the evils, the misfortunes which follow thee closely, as Hitz. interprets in the face of the context. For in ver. 34 we have indisputable evidence that the matter in hand is not evils and misfortunes, but evil deeds or misdemeanours; since there the cleaving of the blood of innocent souls to the hems of the garments is mentioned as one of the basest "evils," and as such is introduced by the יָם of gradation. The "blood of souls" is the blood of innocent murdered men, which clings to the skirts of the murderers' clothes. כְּנָפִים are the skirts of the flowing garment, Ezek. v. 3; 1 Sam. xv. 27; Zech. viii. 23. The plural נִמְצְאוּ before יָם is explained by the fact that נִפְשׁוֹת is the principal idea. אֲבִיוֹנִים are not merely those who live in straitened circumstances, but pious oppressed ones as contrasted with powerful transgressors and oppressors; cf. Ps. xl. 18, lxxii. 13 f., lxxxvi. 1, 2, etc. By the next clause greater prominence is given to the fact that they were slain being innocent. The words: not בְּמִהְרָת, at housebreaking, thou tookest them, contain an allusion to the law in Ex. xxii. 1 and onwards; according to which the killing of a thief caught in the act of breaking in was not a cause of blood-guiltiness. The thought runs thus: The poor ones thou

hast slain were no thieves or robbers whom thou hadst a right to slay, but guiltless pious men; and the killing of them is a crime worthy of death. Ex. xxi. 12. The last words *עַל כָּל־אֵלֶּה* are obscure, and have been very variously interpreted. Changes upon the text are not to the purpose. For we get no help from the reading of the LXX., of the Syr. and Arab., which seem to have read *אֵלֶּה* as *אֵלֶּה*, and which have translated *δρυς* oak or terebinth; since "upon every oak" gives no rational meaning. Nor from the connecting of the words with the next verse (Venem., Schnur., Ros., and others): yet with all this, or in spite of all this, thou saidst; since neither does *כִּי* mean *yet*, nor can the *ו* before *הָאֲמָרִי*, in this connection, introduce the sequel thought. The words manifestly belong to what goes before, and contain a contrast: not in breaking in by night thou tookest them, but upon, or on account of all this. *עַל* in the sig. *upon* gives a suitable sense only if, with Abarb., Ew., Näg., we refer *אֵלֶּה* to *בְּכָנְפוֹ* and take *מִצְאָתָם* as 1st pers.: I found it (the blood of the slain souls) not on the place where the murder took place, but upon all these, *sc.* lappets of the clothes, *i.e.* borne openly for display. But even without dwelling on the fact that *מִחֲתָרָה* does not mean the scene of a murder or breaking in, this explanation is wrecked on the unmistakeably manifest allusion to the law, *אִם בַּמִּחֲתָרָה יִמָּצֵא הַנֶּגֶב*, Ex. xxi. 1, which is ignored, or at least obscured, by that view. The allusion to this passage of the law shows that *מִצְאָתָם* is not 1st but 2d pers., and that the suffix refers to the innocent poor who were slain. Therefore, with Hitz. and Graf, we take *עַל כָּל־אֵלֶּה* in the sig. "on account of all this," and refer the "all this" to the idolatry before mentioned. Consequently the words bear this meaning: Not for a crime thou killedst the poor, but because of thine apostasy from God and thy fornication with the idols, their blood cleaves to thy raiment. The words seem, as Calv. surmised, to point to the persecution and slaying of the prophets spoken of in ver. 30, namely, to the innocent blood with which the godless king Manasseh filled Jerusalem, 2 Kings xxi. 16, xxiv. 4; seeking as he did to crush out all opposition to the abominations of idolatry, and finding in his way the prophets and the godly of the land, who by their words and their lives lifted up their common testimony

against the idolaters and their abandoned practices.—Ver. 35. Yet withal the people holds itself to be guiltless, and deludes itself with the belief that God's wrath has turned away from it, because it has for long enjoyed peace, and because the judgment of devastation of the land by enemies, threatened by the earlier prophets, had not immediately received its fulfilment. For this self-righteous confidence in its innocence, God will contend with His people (אֱתֹנֶה for אֶתֶּנָּה as in i. 16).—Ver. 36 f. Yet in spite of its proud security Judah seeks to assure itself against hostile attacks by the eager negotiation of alliances. This thought is the link between ver. 35 and the reproach of ver. 36. Why runnest thou to change thy way? הָלַךְ for הִלַּךְ, from הָלַךְ, go, with מֵאֵד, go impetuously or with strength, i.e. go in haste, run; cf. 1 Sam. xx. 19. To change, shift (שָׁנֶה) one's way, is to take another way than that on which one has hitherto gone. The prophet's meaning is clear from the second half of the verse: "for Egypt, too, wilt thou come to shame, as for Assyria thou hast come to shame." Changing the way, is ceasing to seek help from Assyria in order to form close relations with Egypt. The verbs הִבְשִׁי and בָּשָׂה show that the intrigues for the favour of Assyria belong to the past, for the favour of Egypt to the present. Judah was put to shame in regard to Assyria under Ahaz, 2 Chron. xxviii. 21; and after the experience of Assyria it had had under Hezekiah and Manasseh, there could be little more thought of looking for help thence. But what could have made Judah under Josiah, in the earlier days of Jeremiah, to seek an alliance with Egypt, considering that Assyria was at that time already nearing its dissolution? Graf is therefore of opinion that the prophet is here keeping in view the political relations in the days of Jehoiakim, in which and for which time he wrote his book, rather than those of Josiah's times, when the alliance with Asshur was still in force; and that he has thus in passing cast a stray glance into a time influenced by later events. But the opinion that in Josiah's time the alliance with Asshur was still existing cannot be historically proved. Josiah's invitation to the passover of all those who remained in what had been the kingdom of the ten tribes, does not prove that he exercised a kind of sovereignty over the provinces that had formerly be-

longed to the kingdom of Israel, a thing he could have done only as vassal of Assyria; see against this view the remarks on 2 Kings xxiii. 15 ff. As little does his setting himself against the now mighty Pharaoh Necho at Megiddo show clearly that he remained faithful to the alliance with Asshur in spite of the disruption of the Assyrian empire; see against this the remarks on 2 Kings xxiii. 29 f. Historically only thus much is certain, that Jehoiakim was raised to the throne by Pharaoh Necho, and that he was a vassal of Egypt. During the period of this subjection the formation of alliances with Egypt was for Judah out of the question. Such a case could happen only when Jehoiakim had become subject to the Chaldean king Nebuchadnezzar, and was cherishing the plan of throwing off the Chaldean yoke. But the reference of the words to this design is devoid of the faintest probability, vers. 35 and 36; and the discourse throughout is far from giving the impression that Judah had already lost its political independence; they rather imply that the kingdom was under the sway neither of Assyrians nor Egyptians, but was still politically independent. We may very plausibly refer to Josiah's time the resolution to give up all trust in the assistance of Assyria and to court the favour of Egypt. We need not seek for the outward inducement to this in the recognition of the beginning decline of the Assyrian power; it might equally well lie in the growth of the Egyptian state. That the power of Egypt had made considerable progress in the reign of Josiah, is made clear by Pharaoh Necho's enterprise against Assyria in the last year of Josiah, from Necho's march towards the Euphrates. Josiah's setting himself in opposition to the advance of the Egyptians, which cost him his life at Megiddo, neither proves that Judah was then allied with Assyria nor excludes the possibility of intrigues for Egypt's favour having already taken place. It is perfectly possible that the taking of Manasseh a captive to Babylon by Assyrian generals may have shaken the confidence in Assyria of the idolatrous people of Judah, and that, their thoughts turning to Egypt, steps may have been taken for paving the way towards an alliance with this great power, even although the godly king Josiah took no part in these proceedings. The prophet's warning against confidence in Egypt and against courting its

alliance, is given in terms so general that it is impossible to draw any certain conclusions either with regard to the principles of Josiah's government or with regard to the circumstances of the time which Jeremiah was keeping in view.—Ver. 37. Also from this, *i.e.* Egypt, shalt thou go away (come back), thy hands upon thy head, *i.e.* beating them on thy head in grief and dismay (cf. for this gesture 2 Sam. xiii. 19). מִצְרַיִם refers to Egypt, thought of as a people as in xlv. 8, Isa. xix. 16, 25; and thus is removed Hitz.'s objection, that in that case we must have מִצְרַיִם, objects of confidence. The expression refers equally to Egypt and to Assyria. As God has broken the power of Assyria, so will He also overthrow Egypt's might, thus making all trust in it a shame. מִצְרַיִם, in reference to them.

Chap. iii. 1-5. As a divorced woman who has become another man's wife cannot return to her first husband, so Judah, after it has turned away to other gods, will not be received again by Jahveh; especially since, in spite of all chastisements, it adheres to its evil ways. Ver. 1. "He saith, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, can he return to her again? would not such a land be polluted? and thou hast whored with many partners; and wouldst thou return to me? saith Jahveh. Ver. 2. Lift up thine eyes unto the bare-topped hills and look, where hast thou not been lien with; on the ways thou satest for them, like an Arab in the desert, and pollutedst the land by thy whoredoms and by thy wickedness. Ver. 3. And the showers were withheld, and the latter rain came not; but thou hadst the forehead of an harlot woman, wouldst not be ashamed. Ver. 4. Ay, and from this time forward thou criest to me, My father, the friend of my youth art thou. Ver. 5. Will he alway bear a grudge and keep it up for ever? Behold, thou speakest thus and dost wickedness and carriest it out." This section is a continuation of the preceding discourse in chap. ii., and forms the conclusion of it. That this is so may be seen from the fact that a new discourse, introduced by a heading of its own, begins with ver. 6. The substance of the fifth verse is further evidence in the same direction; for the rejection of Judah by God declared in that verse furnishes the suitable conclusion to the discourse in chap. ii., and briefly shows how the Lord will plead with the people that holds itself blame-

less (ii. 35).¹ But it is somewhat singular to find the connection made by means of לְאָמַר, which is not translated by the LXX. or Syr., and is expressed by Jerome by *vulgo dicitur*. Ros. would make it, after Rashi, *possem dicere*, Rashi's opinion being that it stands for יֵשׁ לִי לֵאמֹר. In this shape the assumption can hardly be justified. It might be more readily supposed that the infinitive stood in the sense: it is to be said, one may say, it must be affirmed; but there is against this the objection that this use of the infinitive is never found at the beginning of a new train of thought. The only alternative is with Maur. and Hitz. to join לְאָמַר with what precedes, and to make it dependent on the verb מָאָס in ii. 37: Jahveh hath rejected those in whom thou trustest, so that thou shalt not prosper with them; for He says: As a wife, after she has been put away from her husband and has been joined to another, cannot be taken back again by her first husband, so art thou thrust away for thy whoredom. The rejection of Judah by God is not, indeed, declared *expressis verbis* in vers. 1–5, but is clearly enough contained there in substance. Besides, “the rejection of the people’s sureties (ii. 37) involves that of the people too” (Hitz.). לְאָמַר, indeed, is not universally used after *verbis dicendi* alone, but frequently stands after very various antecedent verbs, in which case it must be very variously expressed in English; *e.g.* in Josh. xxii. 11 it comes after יִשְׁמְעוּ, they heard: as follows, or these words; in 2 Sam. iii. 12 we have it twice, once after the words, he sent messengers to David to say, *i.e.* and cause them say to him, a second time in the sense of namely; in 1 Sam. xxvii. 11 with the force of: for he said or thought. It is used here in a

¹ The contrary assertion of Ew. and Nägelsb. that these verses do not belong to what precedes, but constitute the beginning of the next discourse (chap. iii.–vi.), rests upon an erroneous view of the train of thought in this discourse. And such meagre support as it obtains involves a violation of usage in interpreting אֵלַי וְיָשׁוּב אֵלַי as: yet turn again to me, and needs further the arbitrary critical assertion that the heading in iii. 6: and Jahveh said to me in the days of Josiah, has been put by a copyist in the wrong place, and that it ought to stand before ver. 1.—Nor is there any reason for the assumption of J. D. Mich. and Graf, that at ver. 1 the text has been mutilated, and that by an oversight יְהִי דְבַר יְהוָה אֵלַי has dropped out; and this assumption also contradicts the fact that vers. 1–5 can neither contain nor begin any new prophetic utterance.

manner analogous to this: he announces to thee, makes known to thee.—The comparison with the divorced wife is suggested by the law in Deut. xxiv. 1-4. Here it is forbidden that a man shall take in marriage again his divorced wife after she has been married to another, even although she has been separated from her second husband, or even in the case of the death of the latter; and re-marriage of this kind is called an abomination before the Lord, a thing that makes the land sinful. The question, May he yet return to her? corresponds to the words of the law: her husband may not again (לָשׁוּב) take her to be his wife. The making of the land sinful is put by Jer. in stronger words: this land is polluted; making in this an allusion to Lev. xviii. 25, 27, where it is said of similar sins of the flesh that they pollute the land.

With "and thou hast whored" comes the application of this law to the people that had by its idolatry broken its marriage vows to its God. וְנָה is construed with the *accus.* as in Ezek. xvi. 28. רָעִים, comrades in the sense of paramours; cf. Hos. iii. 1. רָבִים, inasmuch as Israel or Judah had intrigued with the gods of many nations. וְשׁוּב אֵלַי is *infin. abs.*, and the clause is to be taken as a question: and is it to be supposed that thou mayest return to me? The question is marked only by the accent; cf. Ew. § 328, *a*, and Gesen. § 131, 4, *b*. Syr., Targ., Jerome, etc. have taken וְשׁוּב as imperative: return again to me; but wrongly, since the continuity is destroyed. This argument is not answered by taking וְ *copul.* adversatively with the sig. yet; it is on the contrary strengthened by this arbitrary interpretation. The call to return to God is incompatible with the reference in ver. 2 to the idolatry which is set before the eyes of the people to show it that God has cause to be wroth. "Look but to the bare-topped hills." שָׁפְּרִים, bald hills and mountains (cf. Isa. xli. 18), were favoured spots for idolatrous worship; cf. Hos. iv. 13. When hast not thou let thyself be ravished? *i.e.* on all sides. For שְׁגֵלָה the Masoretes have here and everywhere substituted שִׁבְבָּה, see Deut. xxviii. 30, Zech. xiv. 2, etc. The word is here used for spiritual ravishment by idolatry; here represented as spiritual fornication. Upon the roads thou sittest, like a prostitute, to entice the passers-by; cf. Gen. xxxviii. 14, Prov. vii. 12. This figure corresponds in actual fact to the

erection of idolatrous altars at the corners of the streets and at the gates: 2 Kings xxiii. 8; Ezek. xvi. 25. Like an Arab in the desert, *i.e.* a Bedouin, who lies in wait for travellers, to plunder them. The Bedouins were known to the ancients, cf. Diod. Sic. ii. 48, Plin. *Hist. Nat.* vi. 28, precisely as they are represented to this day by travellers.—By this idolatrous course Israel desecrated the land. The plural form of the suffix with the singular *זָנִית* is to be explained by the resemblance borne both in sound and meaning (an abstract) by the termination *ית* to the plural *ות*; cf. ver. 8, Zeph. iii. 20, and Ew. § 259, *b*. *רָעָתָהּ* refers to the moral enormities bound up with idolatry, *e.g.* the shedding of innocent blood, ii. 30, 35. The shedding of blood is represented as defilement of the land in Num. xxxv. 33.—Ver. 3. But the idolatrous race was not to be brought to reflection or turned from its evil ways, even when judgment fell upon it. God chastised it by withholding the rain, by drought; cf. xiv. 1 ff., Amos iv. 7 ff. *רִגְבֵי־בַיִם*, rain-showers (Deut. xxxii. 2), does not stand for the early rain (*יוֹרֵה*), but denotes any fall of rain; and the late rain (shortly before harvest) is mentioned along with it, as in Hos. vi. 3, Zech. x. 1. But affliction made no impression. The people persisted in its sinful courses with unabashed effrontery; cf. v. 3, Ezek. iii. 7 f.—Ver. 4. Henceforward, forsooth, it calls upon its God, and expects that His wrath will abate; but this calling on Him is but lip-service, for it goes on in its sins, amends not its life. *הִלֵּיאָה*, *nonne*, has usually the force of a confident assurance, introducing in the form of a question that which is held not to be in the least doubtful. *מֵעַתָּה*, henceforward, the antithesis to *מֵעוֹלָם*, ii. 20, 27, is rightly referred by Chr. B. Mich. to the time of the reformation in public worship, begun by Josiah in the twelfth year of his reign, and finally completed in the eighteenth year, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3–33. Clearly we cannot suppose a reference to distress and anxiety excited by the drought; since, in ver. 3, it is expressly said that this had made no impression on the people. *אֲבִי־נַעֲרִי*, cf. ii. 27. *אֲבִי־נַעֲרִי* (cf. Prov. ii. 17), the familiar friend of my youth, is the dear beloved God, *i.e.* Jahveh, who has espoused Israel when it was a young nation (ii. 2). Of Him it expects that He will not bear a grudge for ever. *נָטַר*, guard, then like *τηρεῖν*, cherish ill-will, keep up, used of anger; see on Lev.

xix. 18, Ps. ciii. 9, etc. A like meaning has יִשְׁכַּח, to which אָרָא, *iram*, is to supplied from the context; cf. Amos i. 11.—Thus the people speaks, but it does evil. דְּבַרְתִּי, like קָרָאתִי in ver. 4, is 2d pers. fem.; see in ii. 20. Hitz. connects דְּבַרְתִּי so closely with וַתַּעַשׂ as to make הָרָעוֹת the object to the former verb also: thou hast spoken and done the evil; but this is plainly contrary to the context. “Thou speakest” refers to the people’s saying quoted in the first half of the verse: Will God be angry for ever? What they do is the contradiction of what they thus say. If the people wishes that God be angry no more, it must give over its evil life. הָרָעוֹת, not calamity, but misdeeds, as in ii. 33. הוֹכַל, thou hast managed it, properly mastered, *i.e.* carried it through; cf. 1 Sam. xxvi. 25, 1 Kings xxii. 22. The form is 2d pers. fem., with the fem. ending dropped on account of the *Vav consec.* at the end of the discourse; cf. *EW.* § 191, *b.* So long as this is the behaviour of the people, God cannot withdraw His anger.

CHAP. III. 6-VI. 30.—THE REJECTION OF IMPENITENT ISRAEL.

These four chapters form a lengthy prophetic discourse of the time of Josiah, in which two great truths are developed: that Israel can become a partaker of promised blessing only through conversion to the Lord, and that by perseverance in apostasy it is drawing on itself the judgment of expulsion amongst the heathen. In the first section, chap. iii. 6-iv. 2, we have the fate of the ten tribes displayed to the faithless Judah, and the future reception again and conversion of Israel announced. In the second section, chap. iv. 3-31, the call to Judah to repent is brought home to the people by the portrayal of the judgment about to fall upon the kingdom, the destruction of Jerusalem and the devastation of the land. In the third section, chap. v., a further description is given of the people’s persistence in unrighteousness and apostasy. And in the fourth section, chap. vi., the impending judgment and its horrors are yet more fully exhibited to a generation blinded by its self-righteous confidence in the external performance of the sacrificial worship.

Eichhorn and Hitz. have separated chap. iii. 6-iv. 2 from

what follows as being a separate oracle, on the ground that at chap. iv. 3 a new series of oracles begins, extending to x. 25. These oracles, they say, "are composed under the impressions created by an invasion of a northern nation, looked for with dread and come at last in reality;" while they find no trace of this invasion in chap. iii. 6-iv. 2. This latter section they hold rather to be the completion to chap. ii. 1-iii. 5, seeing that the severe retort (iii. 5) upon repentant Judah is justified here (iii. 10) by the statement that this is no true repentance; that the harsh saying: thou hast thyself wrought out thy misfortunes, cannot be the prophet's last word; and that the final answer to *לֹא אֶפְסֹר לְעוֹלָם* in ver. 5 is not found before *לֹא אֶפְסֹר לְעוֹלָם הַיָּמִינִי* in ver. 12. By Dahler, Umbreit, Neumann, chap. iii. is taken as an independent discourse; but they hold it to extend to iv. 4, because *כִּי* in iv. 3 cannot introduce a new discourse. The two views are equally untenable. It is impossible that a new discourse should begin with "for thus saith Jahveh;" and it is as impossible that the threatening of judgment beginning with iv. 5, "declare ye in Jahveh," should be torn apart, separated from the call: "plow up a new soil; circumcise the foreskins of your hearts, that my wrath go not forth like fire and burn," etc. (iv. 3, 4). Against the separation and for the unity we have arguments in the absence of any heading and of any trace of a new commencement in chap. iv., and in the connection of the subject-matter of all the sections of these chapters.¹ We have no ground for the disjunction of one part of the discourse from the other in the fact that in chap. iii. 6-iv. 2 apostate Israel (of the ten tribes) is summoned to return to the Lord, and invited to repentance by the promise of acceptance and rich blessing for those who in penitence return again to God; while in iv. 3-vi. the devastation of the land and dispersion amongst the heathen are held out as punishment of a people (Judah) persisting in apostasy (see comment. on iii. 6 ff.). The supposed connection between the discourse, iii. 6-iv. 2 and ii. 1-iii. 5, is not so close as Hitz. would have

¹ By Rosenm. has been justly urged: "*Cum inscriptio hic (3, 6) et c. 7, 1, obvia, qua concionis habitæ tempus notatur, tum manifesta omnium partium inde a c. 3, 6, usque ad finem cap. 6 cohærentia, et orationis tenor sine ullo interstitio ac novæ concionis signo decurrens.*"

it. The relation of chap. iii. 6 ff. to ii. 1 ff. is not that the prophet desires in chap. iii. 6-iv. 2 to explain or mitigate the harsh utterance in iii. 5, because his own heart could not acquiesce in the thought of the utter rejection of his people, and because the wrath of the seer was here calming down again. This opinion and the reference of the threatened judgment in chap. iv.-vi. to the Scythians are based on unscriptural views of the nature of prophecy. But even if, in accordance with what has been said, these four chapters form one continuous prophetic discourse, yet we are not justified by the character of the whole discourse as a unity in assuming that Jeremiah delivered it publicly in this form before the people at some particular time. Against this tells the indefiniteness of the date given: in the days of Josiah; and of still greater weight is the transition, which we mark repeated more than once, from the call to repentance and the denunciation of sin, to threatening and description of the judgment about to fall on people and kingdom, city and country; cf. iv. 3 with v. 1 and vi. 1, 16. From this we can see that the prophet continually begins again afresh, in order to bring more forcibly home to the heart what he has already said. The discourse as we have it is evidently the condensation into one uniform whole of a series of oral addresses which had been delivered by Jeremiah in Josiah's times.

Chap. iii. 6-iv. 2. THE REJECTION AND RESTORATION OF ISRAEL (OF THE TEN TRIBES).—Hgsth. speaks of this passage as the announcement of redemption in store for Israel. And he so speaks not without good cause; for although in iii. 6-9 the subject is the rejection of Israel for its backsliding from the Lord, yet this introduction to the discourse is but the historical foundation for the declaration of good news (iii. 12-iv. 2), that rejected Israel will yet return to its God, and have a share in the glory of the Messiah. From the clearly drawn parallel between Israel and Judah in iii. 8-11 it is certain that the announcement of Israel's redemption can have no other aim than "to wound Judah." The contents of the whole discourse may be summed up in two thoughts: 1. Israel is not to remain always rejected, as pharisaic Judah imagined; 2. Judah is not to be always spared. When Jeremiah entered upon his office

Israel had been in exile for 94 years, and all hope for the restoration of the banished people seemed to have vanished. But Judah, instead of taking warning by the judgment that had fallen upon the ten tribes, and instead of seeing in the downfall of the sister people the prognostication of its own, was only confirmed by it in its delusion, and held its own continued existence to be a token that against it, as the people of God, no judgment of wrath could come. This delusion must be destroyed by the announcement of Israel's future reinstatement.

Vers. 6-10. *Israel's backsliding and rejection a warning for Judah.*—Ver. 6. "And Jahveh spake to me in the days of King Josiah, Hast thou seen what the backsliding one, Israel, hath done? she went up on every high mountain, and under every green tree, and played the harlot there. Ver. 7. And I thought: After she hath done all this, she will return to me; but she returned not. And the faithless one, her sister Judah, saw it. Ver. 8. And I saw that, because the backsliding one, Israel, had committed adultery, and I had put her away, and had given her a bill of divorce, yet the faithless one, Judah, her sister, feared not even on this account, and went and played the harlot also. Ver. 9. And it befell that for the noise of her whoredom the land was defiled, and she committed adultery with stone and wood. Ver. 10. And yet with all this, the faithless one, her sister Judah, turned not to me with her whole heart, but with falsehood, saith Jahveh." The thought of these verses is this: notwithstanding that Judah has before its eyes the lot which Israel (of the ten tribes) has brought on itself by its obdurate apostasy from the covenant God, it will not be moved to true fear of God and real repentance. Viewing idolatry as spiritual whoredom, the prophet develops that train of thought by representing the two kingdoms as two adulterous sisters, calling the inhabitants of the ten tribes מְשֻׁבָּה, the backsliding, those of Judah בְּנוּדָה, the faithless. On these names Venema well remarks: "*Sorores propter unam eandemque stirpem, unde uterque populus fuit, et arctam ad se invicem relationem appellantur. Utraque fuit adultera propter idololatriam et fœderis violationem; sed Israel vocatur uxor aversa; Juda vero perfida, quia Israel non tantum religionis sed et regni et*

civitatis respectu, adeoque palam erat a Deo alienata, Juda vero Deo et sedi regni ac religionis adfixa, sed nihilominus a Deo et cultu ejus defecerat, et sub externa specie populi Dei fœdus ejus fregerat, quo ipso gravius peccaverat." This representation Ezekiel has in chap. xxiii. expanded into an elaborate allegory. The epithets מְשַׁכֶּה and בְּנוּדָה or בִּנְיָדָה (ver. 11) are coined into proper names. This is shown by their being set without articles before the names; as mere epithets they would stand after the substantives and have the article, since *Israel* and *Judah* as being *nomm. propr.* are definite ideas. מְשַׁכֶּה is elsewhere an abstract substantive: apostasy, defection (viii. 5; Hos. xi. 7, etc.), here concrete, the apostate, so-called for her many מְשַׁבּוֹת, ver. 22 and ii. 19. בְּנוּדָה, the faithless, used of perfidious forsaking of a husband; cf. ver. 20, Mal. ii. 14. הִלְכָה הִיא, going was she, expressing continuance. Cf. the same statement in ii. 20. וַתֵּנִי, 3d pers. fem., is an Aramaizing form for וַתֵּנֶנִּי or וַתֵּנִן; cf. Isa. liii. 10.—Ver. 7. And I said, *sc.* to myself, *i.e.* I thought. A speaking by the prophets (Rashi) is not to be thought of; for it is no summons, turn again to me, but only the thought, they will return. It is true that God caused backsliding Israel to be ever called again to repentance by the prophets, yet without effect. Meantime, however, no reference is made to what God did in this connection, only Israel's behaviour towards the Lord being here kept in view. The *Chet.* וַתֵּרְאֶה is the later usage; the *Keri* substitutes the regular contracted form וַתֵּרָא. The object, it (the whoredom of Israel), may be gathered from what precedes.—Ver. 8. Many commentators have taken objection to the וַתֵּרָא, because the sentence, "I saw that I had therefore given Israel a bill of divorce," is as little intelligible as "and the faithless Judah saw it, and I saw it, for," etc. Thus *e.g.* Graf, who proposes with Ew. and Syr. to read וַתֵּרָא, "and she saw," or with Jerome to omit the word from the text. Against both conjectures it is decisive that the LXX. translates καὶ εἶδον, and so must have read וַתֵּרָא. To this we may add, that either the change or the omission destroys the natural relation to one another of the clauses. In either case we would have this connection: "and the faithless one, her sister Judah, saw that, because the backslider Israel had committed adultery, I had put her away . . .

yet the faithless one feared not." But thus the gist of the thing, what Judah saw, namely, the repudiation of Israel, would be related but cursorily in a subordinate clause, and the 7th verse would be shortened into a half verse; while, on the other hand, the 8th verse would be burdened with an unnaturally long protasis. Ros. is right in declaring any change to be unnecessary, provided the two halves of vers. 7 and 8 are connected in this sense: *vidi quod quum adulteram Israelitidem dimiseram, tamen non timeret ejus perfida soror Juda*. If we compare vers. 7 and 8 together, the correspondence between the two comes clearly out. In the first half of either verse Israel is spoken of, in the second Judah; while as to Israel, both verses state how God regarded the conduct of Israel, and as to Judah, how it observed and imitated Israel's conduct. וְאִתָּךְ corresponds to וְאִתָּךְ in ver. 7. God thought the backsliding Israel will repent, and it did not, and this Judah saw. Thus, then, God saw that even the repudiation of the backsliding Israel for her adultery incited no fear in Judah, but Judah went and did whoredom like Israel. The true sense of ver. 8 is rendered obscure or difficult by the external co-ordination to one another of the two thoughts, that God has rejected Israel just because it has committed adultery, and, that Judah nevertheless feared not; the second thought being introduced by Vav. In reality, however, the first should be subordinated to the second thus: that although I had to reject Israel, Judah yet feared not. What God saw is not the adultery and rejection or divorce of Israel, but that Judah nevertheless had no fear in committing and persisting in the self-same sin. The כִּי belongs properly to לֹא יִרְאֶה, but this relation is obscured by the length of the prefixed grounding clause, and so לֹא יִרְאֶה is introduced by וְ. וְעַל-כֵּן-אֲדֹת וְנִי, literally: that for all the reasons, because the backslider had committed adultery, I put her away and gave her a bill of divorce; yet the faithless Judah feared not. In plain English: that, in spite of all my putting away the backsliding Israel, and my giving her . . . because she had committed adultery, yet the faithless Judah feared not. On כִּי, cf. Deut. xxiv. 1, 3.

In ver. 9 Judah's fornication with the false gods is further described. Here כִּקְלָהּ is rather stumbling, since *ob vocem*

scortationis cannot well be simply tantamount to *ob famosam scortationem*; for לֵךְ, voice, tone, sound, din, noise, is distinct from שֵׁם or שִׁמְעָה, fame, rumour. All ancient translators have taken לֵךְ from לֵל, as being formed analogously to מֵח, מֵחָ, רֵח; and a Masoretic note finds in the defective spelling לֵךְ an indication of the meaning *levitas*. Yet we occasionally find לֵךְ, *vox*, written defectively, e.g. Ex. iv. 8, Gen. xxvii. 22, xlv. 16. And the derivation from לֵל gives no very suitable sense; neither lightness nor despisedness is a proper predicate for whoredom, by which the land is polluted; only shame or shameful would suit, as it is put by Ew. and Graf. But there is no evidence from the usage of the language that לֵךְ has the meaning of לֵחַ. Yet more inadmissible is the conjecture of J. D. Mich., adopted by Hitz., that of reading לֵךְ, stock, for לֵךְ, a stock being the object of her unchastity; in support of which, reference is unfairly made to Hos. iv. 12. For there the matter in hand is rhabdomancy, with which the present passage has evidently nothing to do. The case standing thus, we adhere to the usual meaning of לֵךְ: for the noise or din of her whoredom, not, for her crying whoredom (de Wette). Jeremiah makes use of this epithet to point out the open riotous orgies of idolatry. לֵךְ is neither used in the active signification of desecrating, nor is it to be pointed לֵךְ (Hiph.). On the last clause cf. ii. 27.—Ver. 10. But even with all this, i.e. in spite of this deep degradation in idolatry, Judah returned not to God sincerely, but in hypocritical wise. “And yet with all this,” Ros., following Rashi, refers to the judgment that had fallen on Israel (ver. 8); but this is too remote. The words can bear reference only to that which immediately precedes: even in view of all these sinful horrors the returning was not “from the whole heart,” i.e. did not proceed from a sincere heart, but in falsehood and hypocrisy. For (the returning being that which began with the abolition of idolatrous public worship in Josiah’s reformation) the people had returned outwardly to the worship of Jahveh in the temple, but at heart they still clung to the idols. Although Josiah had put an end to the idol-worship, and though the people too, in the enthusiasm for the service of Jahveh, awakened by the solemn celebration of the passover, had broken in pieces the images and altars of the false

gods throughout the land, yet there was imminent danger that the people, alienated in heart from the living God, should take the suppression of open idolatry for a true return to God, and, vainly admiring themselves, should look upon themselves as righteous and pious. Against this delusion the prophet takes his stand.

Vers. 11–18. *Israel's return, pardon, and blessedness.*—Ver. 11. “And Jahveh said to me, The backsliding one, Israel, is justified more than the faithless one, Judah. Ver. 12. Go and proclaim these words towards the north, and say, Turn, thou backsliding one, Israel, saith Jahveh; I will not look darkly on you, for I am gracious, saith Jahveh; I will not always be wrathful. Ver. 13. Only acknowledge thy guilt, for from Jahveh thy God art thou fallen away, and hither and thither hast thou wandered to strangers under every green tree, but to my voice ye have not hearkened, saith Jahveh. Ver. 14. Return, backsliding sons, saith Jahveh; for I have wedded you to me, and will take you, one out of a city and two out of a race, and will bring you to Zion; Ver. 15. And will give you shepherds according to my heart, and they will feed you with knowledge and wisdom. Ver. 16. And it comes to pass, when ye increase and are fruitful in the land, in those days, saith Jahveh, they will no more say, ‘The ark of the covenant of Jahveh;’ and it will no more come to mind, and ye will no longer remember it nor miss it, and it shall not be made again. Ver. 17. In that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of Jahveh; and to it all peoples shall gather themselves, because the name of Jahveh is at Jerusalem: and no longer shall they walk after the stubbornness of their evil heart. Ver. 18. In those days shall the house of Judah go along with the house of Israel, and together out of the land of midnight shall they come into the land which I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers.” In ver. 11, from the comparison of the faithless Judah with the backsliding Israel, is drawn the conclusion: Israel stands forth more righteous than Judah. The same is said in other words by Ezekiel, xvi. 51 f.; cf. (Ezek.) xxiii. 11. קָדַשׁ in *Piel* is to show to be righteous, to justify. נַפְשָׁהּ, her soul, *i.e.* herself. Israel appears more righteous than Judah, not because the apostasy and idolatry of the Israelites was less than that of the people of Judah; in this they are put

on the same footing in vers. 6-10; in the like fashion both have played the harlot, *i.e.* stained themselves with idolatry (while by a rhetorical amplification the apostasy of Judah is in ver. 9 represented as not greater than that of Israel). But it is inasmuch as, in the first place, Judah had the warning example of Israel before its eyes, but would not be persuaded to repentance by Israel's punishment; then again, Judah had more notable pledges than the ten tribes of divine grace, especially in the temple with its divinely-ordained cultus, in the Levitical priesthood, and in its race of kings chosen by God. Hence its fall into idolatry called more loudly for punishment than did that of the ten tribes; for these, after their disruption from Judah and the Davidic dynasty, had neither a lawful cultus, lawful priests, nor a divinely-ordained kingship. If, then, in spite of these privileges, Judah sank as far into idolatry as Israel, its offence was greater and more grievous than that of the ten tribes; and it was surely yet more deserving of punishment than Israel, if it was resolved neither to be brought to reflection nor moved to repentance from its evil ways by the judgment that had fallen upon Israel, and if, on the contrary, it returned to God only outwardly and took the *opus operatum* of the temple-service for genuine conversion. For "the measure of guilt is proportioned to the measure of grace." Yet will not the Lord utterly cast off His people, ver. 12 ff. He summons to repentance the Israelites who had now long been living in exile; and to them, the backsliding sons, who confess their sin and return to Him, He offers restoration to the full favours of the covenant and to rich blessings, and this in order to humble Judah and to provoke it to jealousy. The call to repentance which the prophet is in ver. 12 to proclaim towards the region of midnight, concerns the ten tribes living in Assyrian exile. צפנה, towards midnight, *i.e.* into the northern provinces of the Assyrian empire the tribes had been carried away (2 Kings xvii. 6, xviii. 11). שובה, return, *sc.* to thy God. Notwithstanding that the subject which follows, קשבה, is fem., we have the masculine form here used *ad sensum*, because the faithless Israel is the people of the ten tribes. לא אפיל פני, I will not lower my countenance, is explained by Gen. iv. 5, Job xxix. 24, and means to look darkly, frowningly, as outward expres-

sion of anger; and this without our needing to take מְנִי for מַעֲסִי as Kimchi does. For I am חַסִּיד, gracious; cf. Ex. xxxiv. 6. As to אָטוּר, see on ver. 5.—Ver. 13. An indispensable element of the return is: Acknowledge thy guilt, thine offence, for grievously hast thou offended; thou art fallen away (פָּשַׁע), and תִּפְצְרִי אֶת־דְּרָכֶיךָ, lit. hast scattered thy ways for strangers; i.e. hither and thither, on many a track, hast thou run after the strange gods: cf. ii. 23.

The repeated call שׁוּבוּ, ver. 14, is, like that in ver. 12, addressed to Israel in the narrower sense, not to the whole covenant people or to Judah. The “backsliding sons” are “the backsliding Israel” of vers. 7, 8, 11 f., and of ver. 22. In ver. 18 also Judah is mentioned only as it is in connection with Israel. בָּעַלְתִּי בָכֶם, here and in xxxi. 32, is variously explained. There is no evidence for the meaning loathe, despise, which Ges. and Diet. in the *Lex.*, following the example of Jos. Kimchi, Pococke, A. Schultens, and others, attribute to the word בָּעַל; against this, cf. Hgstb. *Christol.* ii. p. 375; nor is the sig. “rule” certified (LXX. διότι ἐγὼ κατακυριεύσω ὑμῶν); it cannot be proved from Isa. xxvi. 13. בָּעַל means only, own, possess; whence come the meanings, take to wife, have oneself married, which are to be maintained here and in xxxi. 32. In this view Jerome translates, *quia ego vir vester*; Luther, *denn ich will euch mir vertrauen*; Hgstb., *denn ich traue euch mir an*;—the reception anew of the people being given under the figure of a new marriage. This acceptance is, however, not suitable to the perf. בָּעַלְתִּי, for this, even if taken prophetically, cannot refer to a renewal of marriage which is to take place in the future. The perf. can be referred only to the marriage of Israel at the conclusion of the covenant on Sinai, and must be translated accordingly: I am your husband, or: I have wedded you to me. This is demanded by the grounding בִּי; for the summons to repent cannot give as its motive some future act of God, but must point to that covenant relationship founded in the past, which, though suspended for a time, was not wholly broken up.¹ The promise of what

¹ Calvin gives it rightly: “*Dixerat enim, se dedisse libellum repudiū h. e. quasi publicis tabulis se testatum fuisse, nihil amplius sibi esse conjunctionis cum populo illo. Nam exilium erat instar divortii. Jam dicit: Ego sum*

God will do if Israel repents is given only from *וְלִקְחֶתִי* (with *consec.*) onwards. The words, I take you, one out of a city, two out of a race, are not with Kimchi to be so turned: if even a single Israelite dwelt in a heathen city; but thus: if from amongst the inhabitants of a city there returns to me but one, and if out of a whole race there return but two, I will gather even these few and bring them to Zion. Quite aside from the point is Hitz.'s remark, that in Mic. v. 1, too, a city is called *אֶלֶף*, and is equivalent to *מִשְׁפָּחָה*. The numbers one and two themselves show us that *מִשְׁפָּחָה* is a larger community than the inhabitants of one town, *i.e.* that it indicates the great subdivisions into which the tribes of Israel were distributed. The thought, then, is this: Though but so small a number obey the call to repent, yet the Lord will save even these; He will exclude from salvation no one who is willing to return, but will increase the small number of the saved to a great nation. This promise is not only not contradictory of those which declare the restoration of Israel as a whole; but it is rather a pledge that God will forget no one who is willing to be saved, and shows the greatness of the divine compassion.—As to the historical reference, it is manifest that the promise cannot be limited, as it is by Theodrt. and Grot., to the return from the Assyrian and Babylonian exile; and although the majority of commentators take it so, it can as little be solely referred to the Messianic times or to the time of the consummation of the kingdom of God. The fulfilment is accomplished gradually. It begins with the end of the Babylonian exile, in so far as at that time individual members of the ten tribes may have returned into the land of their fathers; it is continued in Messianic times during the lives of the apostles, by the reception, on the part of the Israelites, of the salvation that had appeared in Christ; it is carried on throughout the whole history of the Church, and attains its completion in the final conversion of Israel. This Messianic reference of the words is here the ruling one. This we may see from “bring you to Zion,” which is intelligible

maritus vester. Nam etiamsi ego tam graviter læsus a vobis fuerim, quia fefellistis fidem mihi datam, tamen maneo in proposito, ut sim vobis maritus; . . . et perinde ac si mihi semper præstitissetis, iterum assumam vos, inquit.”

only when we look on Zion as the seat of the kingdom of God; and yet more clearly is it seen from the further promise, vers. 15-17, I will give you shepherds according to my heart, etc. By shepherds we are not to understand prophets and priests, but the civil authorities, rulers, princes, kings (cf. ii. 8, 26). This may not only be gathered from the parallel passage, chap. xxiii. 4, but is found in the *בְּלָקִי*, which is an unmistakeable allusion to 1 Sam. xiii. 14, where David is spoken of as a man whom Jahveh has sought out for Himself after His heart (*בְּלָבָבִי*), and has set to be prince over His people. They will feed you *וְהִשְׂבִּיחַ* *וְהִשְׂבִּיחַ*. Both these words are used adverbially. *וְהִשְׂבִּיחַ* is a noun, and *וְהִשְׂבִּיחַ* an *infin.*: deal wisely, possess, and show wisdom; the latter is as noun generally *וְהִשְׂבִּיחַ*, Dan. i. 17, Prov. i. 3, xxi. 16, but is found also as *infin. absol.* ix. 23. A direct contrast to these shepherds is found in the earlier kings, whom Israel had itself appointed according to the desire of its heart, of whom the Lord said by Hosea, They have set up kings (to themselves), but not by me (viii. 4); kings who seduced the people of God to apostasy, and encouraged them in it. "In the whole of the long series of Israelitish rulers we find no Jehoshaphat, no Hezekiah, no Josiah; and quite as might have been expected, for the foundation of the throne of Israel was insurrection" (Hgsth.). But if Israel will return to the Lord, He will give it rulers according to His heart, like David (cf. Ezek. xxxiv. 23, Hos. iii. 5), who did wisely (*וְהִשְׂבִּיחַ*) in all his ways, and with whom Jahveh was (1 Sam. xviii. 14 f.; cf. 1 Kings ii. 3). The knowledge and wisdom consists in the keeping and doing of the law of God, Deut. iv. 6, xxix. 8. As regards form, the promise attaches itself to the circumstances of the earlier times, and is not to be understood of particular historical rulers in the period after the exile; it means simply that the Lord will give to Israel, when it is converted to Him, good and faithful governors who will rule over it in the spirit of David. But the Davidic dynasty culminates in the kingship of the Messiah, who is indeed named David by the prophets; cf. xxii. 4.

In vers. 16 and 17 also the thought is clothed in a form characteristic of the Old Testament. When the returned Israelites shall increase and be fruitful in the land, then shall they no

more remember the ark of the covenant of the Lord or feel the want of it, because Jerusalem will then be the throne of the Lord. The fruitfulness and increase of the saved remnant is a constant feature in the picture of Israel's Messianic future; cf. xxiii. 3, Ezek. xxxvi. 11, Hos. ii. 1. This promise rests on the blessing given at the creation, Gen. i. 28. God as creator and preserver of the world increases mankind together with the creatures; even so, as covenant God, He increases His people Israel. Thus He increased the sons of Israel in Egypt to be a numerous nation, Ex. i. 12; thus, too, He will again make fruitful and multiply the small number of those who have been saved from the judgment that scattered Israel amongst the heathen. In the passages which treat of this blessing, פָּרַר generally precedes רָבָה; here, on the contrary, and in Ezek. xxxvi. 11, the latter is put first. The words לֹא יִאָּמְרוּ וְגו' must not be translated: they will speak no more of the ark of the covenant; אָמַר *c. accus.* never has this meaning. They must be taken as the substance of what is said, the predicate being omitted for rhetorical effect, so that the words are to be taken as an exclamation. Hgstb. supplies: It is the aim of all our wishes, the object of our longing. Mov. simply: It is our most precious treasure, or the glory of Israel, 1 Sam. iv. 21 f.; Ps. lxxviii. 61. And they will no more remember it. Ascend into the heart, *i.e.* come to mind, joined with יָזַכַּר here and in Isa. lxx. 17; cf. Jer. vii. 31, xxxii. 35, li. 50, 1 Cor. ii. 9. וְלֹא יִפָּקְרוּ, and they will not miss it; cf. Isa. xxxiv. 16, 1 Sam. xx. 6, etc. This meaning is called for by the context, and especially by the next clause: it will not be made again. Hitz.'s objection against this, that the words cannot mean this, is an arbitrary dictum. *Non fiet amplius* (Chr. B. Mich.), or, it will not happen any more, is an unsuitable translation, for this would be but an unmeaning addition; and the expansion, that the ark will be taken into the battle as it formerly was, is such a manifest rabbinical attempt to twist the words, that it needs no further refutation. Luther's translation, nor offer more there, is untenable, since עָשָׂה by itself never means offer. The thought is this: then they will no longer have any feeling of desire or want towards the ark. And wherefore? The answer is contained in ver. 17a: At that time will they

call Jerusalem the throne of Jahveh. The ark was the throne of Jahveh, inasmuch as Jahveh, in fulfilment of His promise in Ex. xxv. 22, and as covenant God, was ever present to His people in a cloud over the extended wings of the two cherubim that were upon the covering of the ark of the law; from the mercy-seat too, between the two cherubs, He spake with His people, and made known to them His gracious presence: Lev. xvi. 2; cf. 1 Chron. xiii. 6, Ps. lxxx. 2, 1 Sam. iv. 4. The ark was therefore called the footstool of God, 1 Chron. xxviii. 2; Ps. xcix. 5, cxxxii. 7; Lam. ii. 1. But in future Jerusalem is to be, and to be called, the throne of Jahveh; and it is in such a manner to take the place of the ark, that the people will neither miss it nor make any more mention of it. The promise by no means presumes that when Jeremiah spoke or wrote this prophecy the ark was no longer in existence; "was gone out of sight in some mysterious manner," as Movers, *Chron. S.* 139, and Hitz. suppose,¹ but only that it will be lost or destroyed. This could happen only at and along with the destruction of Jerusalem; and history testifies that the temple after the exile had no ark. Hence it is justly concluded that the ark had perished in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, and that upon the rebuilding of the temple after the exile, the ark was not restored, because the nucleus of it, the tables of the law written by the finger of God, could not be constructed by the hand of man. Without the ark the second temple was also without the gracious presence of Jahveh, the Shechinah or dwelling-place of God; so that this temple was no longer the throne of God, but only a seeming temple, without substance or reality. And thus the Old Testament covenant

¹ Against this Hgstb. well says, that this allegation springs from the incapacity of modern exegesis to accommodate itself to the prophetic anticipation of the future; and that we might as well infer from iii. 18, that at the time these words were spoken, the house of Judah must already in some mysterious manner have come into the land of the north. 2 Chron. xxxv. 3 furnishes unimpeachable testimony to the existence of the ark in the 18th year of Josiah. And even Graf says he cannot find anything to justify Movers' conclusion, since from the special stress laid on the fact that at a future time they will have the ark no longer, it might more naturally be inferred that the ark was still in the people's possession, and was an object of care to them.

had come to an end. "We have here then before us," Hgstb. truly observes, "the announcement of an entire overthrow of the earlier form of the kingdom; but it is such an overthrow of the form that it is at the same time the highest perfection of the substance—a process like that in seed-corn, which only dies in order to bring forth much fruit; like that in the body, which is sown a corruptible that it may rise an incorruptible." For the dwelling and enthronement of the Lord amidst His people was again to come about, but in a higher form. Jerusalem is to become the throne of Jahveh, *i.e.* Jerusalem is to be for the renewed Israel that which the ark had been for the former Israel, the holy dwelling-place of God. Under the old covenant Jerusalem had been the city of Jahveh, of the great King (Ps. xlviii. 3); because Jerusalem had possessed the temple, in which the Lord sat enthroned in the holy of holies over the ark. If in the future Jerusalem is to become the throne of the Lord instead of the ark, Jerusalem must itself become a sanctuary of God; God the Lord must fill all Jerusalem with His glory (קְבוֹרָה), as Isaiah prophesied He would in chap. lx., of which prophecy we have the fulfilment portrayed in Apoc. xxi. and xxii. Jeremiah does not more particularly explain how this is to happen, or how the raising of Jerusalem to be the throne of the Lord is to be accomplished; for he is not seeking in this discourse to proclaim the future reconstitution of the kingdom of God. His immediate aim is to clear away the false props of their confidence from a people that set its trust in the possession of the temple and the ark, and further to show it that the presence of the temple and ark will not protect it from judgment; that, on the contrary, the Lord will reject faithless Judah, destroying Jerusalem and the temple; that nevertheless He will keep His covenant promises, and that by receiving again as His people the repentant members of the ten tribes, regarded by Judah as wholly repudiated, with whom indeed He will renew His covenant.

As a consequence of Jerusalem's being raised to the glory of being the Lord's throne, all nations will gather themselves to her, the city of God; cf. Zech. ii. 15. Indeed in the Old Testament every revelation of the glory of God amongst His people attracted the heathen; cf. Jos. ix. 9 ff. לְשֵׁם יְהוָה, not, to the

name of Jahveh towards Jerusalem (Hitz.), but, because of the name of Jahveh at Jerusalem (as in Jos. ix. 9), *i.e.* because Jahveh reveals His glory there; for the name of Jahveh is Jahveh Himself in the making of His glorious being known in deeds of almighty power and grace. לִירוּשָׁלַם, prop. belonging to Jerusalem, because the name makes itself known there; cf. xvi. 19, Mic. iv. 2, Zech. viii. 22.—The last clause, they will walk no more, etc., refers not to the heathen peoples, but to the Israelites as being the principal subject of the discourse (cf. v. 16), since שְׁרָרָתָא לֵב is used of Israel in all the cases (vii. 24, ix. 13, xi. 8, xiii. 10, xvi. 12, xviii. 12, xxiii. 17, and Ps. lxxxi. 13), thus corresponding to the original in Deut. xxix. 18, whence it is taken. שְׁרָרִית, prop. firmness, but in Hebr. always *sensu malo*: obstinacy, obduracy of heart, see in Deut. *l.c.*; here strengthened by the adjective הָרַע belonging to לֵבָם.—Ver. 18. In those days when Jerusalem is glorified by being made the throne of the Lord, Judah along with Israel will come out of the north into the land which the Lord gave to their fathers. As the destruction of Jerusalem and of the temple is foretold *implicite* in ver. 16, so here the expulsion of Judah into exile is assumed as having already taken place, and the return not of Israel only, but of Judah too is announced, as in Hos. ii. 2, and more fully in Ezek. xxvii. 16 ff. We should note the arrangement, the house of Judah with (עַל, prop. on) the house of Israel; this is as much as to say that Israel is the first to resolve on a return and to arise, and that Judah joins itself to the house of Israel. Judah is thus subordinated to the house of Israel, because the prophet is here seeking chiefly to announce the return of Israel to the Lord. It can surely not be necessary to say that, as regards the fulfilment, we are not entitled hence to infer that the remnant of the ten tribes will positively be converted to the Lord and redeemed out of exile sooner than the remnant of Judah. For more on this point see on xxxi. 8.

Vers. 19–25. *The return of Israel to its God.*—Ver. 19. “I thought, O how I will put thee among the sons, and give thee a delightful land, a heritage of the chiefest splendour of the nations! and thought, ‘My Father,’ ye will cry to me, and not turn yourselves away from me. Ver. 20. Truly as a wife faith-

lessly forsakes her mate, so are ye become faithless towards me, house of Israel, saith Jahveh. Ver. 21. A voice upon the bare-topped hills is heard, suppliant weeping of the sons of Israel; for that they have made their way crooked, forsaken Jahveh their God. Ver. 22. 'Return, ye backsliding sons, I will heal your backslidings.' Behold, we come to thee; for Thou Jahveh art our God. Ver. 23. Truly the sound from the hills, from the mountains, is become falsehood: truly in Jahveh our God is the salvation of Israel. Ver. 24. And shame hath devoured the gains of our fathers from our youth on; their sheep and their oxen, their sons and their daughters. Ver. 25. Let us lie down in our shame, and let our disgrace cover us; for against Jahveh our God have we sinned, we and our fathers, from our youth even unto this day, and have not listened to the voice of our God." Hitz. takes vers. 18 and 19 together, without giving an opinion on *וְאֶנְכִי אֶמְרָתִי*. Ew. joins ver. 19 to the preceding, and begins a new strophe with ver. 21. Neither assumption can be justified. With ver. 18 closes the promise which formed the burden of the preceding strophe, and in ver. 19 there begins a new train of thought, the announcement as to how Israel comes to a consciousness of sin and returns penitent to the Lord its God (vers. 21-25). The transition to this announcement is formed by vers. 19 and 20, in which the contrast between God's fatherly designs and Israel's faithless bearing towards God is brought prominently forward; and by *וְאֶנְכִי אֶמְרָתִי* it is attached to the last clause of the 18th verse. His having mentioned the land into which the Israelites would again return, carries the prophet's thoughts back again to the present and the past, to the bliss which Jahveh had designed for them, forfeited by their faithless apostasy, and to be regained only by repentant return (Graf). "I thought," refers to the time when God gave the land to their fathers for an inheritance. Then spake, *i.e.* thought, I; cf. Ps. xxxi. 23. How I will set thee or place thee among the sons! *i.e.* how I will make thee glorious among the sons (*וְשִׁיתָ ע. accus.* and *בְּ*, as in 2 Sam. xix. 29). No valid objection against this is founded by Hitz.'s plea that in that case we must read *וְשִׁיתָ*, and that by Jeremiah, the teacher of morals, no heathen nation, or any but Israel, can ever be regarded as a son of God (xxx. 9, 20). The fem. *וְשִׁיתָ* is explained by the

personification of Judah and Israel as two sisters, extending throughout the whole prophecy. The other objection is erroneous as to the fact. In xxxi. 9 Jahveh calls Ephraim, = Israel, his first-born son, as all Israel is called by God in Ex. iv. 22. But the conception of first-born has, as necessary correlate, that of other "sons." Inasmuch as Jahveh the God of Israel is creator of the world and of all men, all the peoples of the earth are His בָּנִים; and from amongst all the peoples He has made choice of Israel as סִגְלָה, or chosen him for His first-born son. Hitz.'s translation: how will I endow thee with children, is contrary to the usage of the language.—The place which God willed to give Israel amongst His children is specified by the next clause: and I willed to give thee a delightful land (אֶרֶץ הַמְּנוּחָה) as in Zech. vii. 14, Ps. cvi. 24). זִכְרֹת, orna-ments, *i.e.* the greatest, most splendid ornament. For there can be no doubt that זִכְרֹת does not come from זָכַר, but, with Kimchi after the Targum, is to be derived from זָכַר; for the plural זְכוֹרִים from זָכַר may pass into זִכְרֹת, cf. Gesen. § 93. 6b, as Ew., too, in § 186, *e*, admits, though he takes our זִכְרֹת from זָכַר, and strains the meaning into: an heirloom-adornment amidst the hosts of heathen. After such proofs of a father's love, God expected that Israel would by a true cleaving to Him show some return of filial affection. To cry, "My father," is a token of a child's love and adherence. The *Chet*. הִקְרָאתִי and הִשְׁנוֹנוּ are not to be impugned; the *Keris* are unnecessary alterations.—Ver. 20. But Israel did not meet the expectation. Like a faithless wife from her husband, Israel fell away from its God. The particle of comparison כִּי־כִּשְׁמֶה is omitted before the verb, as in Isa. lv. 9, cf. 10 and 11. רֵעַ does not precisely mean husband, nor yet paramour, but friend and companion, and so here is equal to wedded husband. בָּנָה *c.* מִן, withdraw faithlessly from one, faithlessly forsake,—*c.* בָּ, be faithless, deal faithlessly with one.

Yet Israel will come to a knowledge of its iniquity, and bitterly repent it, ver. 21. From the heights where idolatry was practised, the prophet already hears in spirit the lamentations and supplications of the Israelites entreating for forgiveness. עַל שְׂפָתַיִם points back to ver. 2, when the naked heights were mentioned as the scenes of idolatry. From these places is heard the supplicating cry for pardon. בִּי הָעֵינִי, because (for that) they

had made their way crooked, *i.e.* had entered on a crooked path, had forgotten their God.—Ver. 22. The prophet further overhears in spirit, as answer to the entreaty of the Israelites, the divine invitation and promise: Return, ye backsliding children (cf. ver. 14), I will heal your backslidings. אָרְפָּה for אָרְפָּה. Backslidings, *i.e.* mischief which backsliding has brought, the wounds inflicted by apostasy from God; cf. Hos. xiv. 5, a passage which was in the prophet's mind; and for the figure of healing, cf. Jer. xxx. 17, xxxiii. 6. To this promise they answer: Behold, we come to Thee (אָתָּה for אָתָּה from אָתָּה, Isa. xxi. 12, for אָתָּה), for Thou art Jahveh, art our God. Of this confession they further state the cause in vers. 23-25.—Ver. 23. From the false gods they have gained but disgrace; the salvation of Israel is found only in Jahveh their God. The thought now given is clearly expressed in the second clause of the verse; less clear is the meaning of the first clause, which tells what Israel had got from idolatry. The difficulty lies in הָמוֹן הָהָרִים, which the early commentators so joined together as to make הָמוֹן *stat. constr.* (הָמוֹן). LXX.: εἰς ψεῦδος ἦσαν οἱ βουνοὶ καὶ ἡ δύναμις τῶν ὀρέων. Jerome: mendaces erant colles et multitudo (*s. fortitudo*) montium. Similarly Hitz. and Graf: from the hills the host (or tumult) of the mountains is (for) a delusion; Hitz. understanding by the host of the mountains the many gods, or the numerous statues of them that were erected at the spots where they were worshipped, while Graf takes the tumult of the mountains to mean the turmoil of the pilgrims, the exulting cries of the celebrants. But it is as impossible that “the sound of the hills” should mean the multitude of the gods, as that it should mean the tumult of the pilgrims upon the mountains. Besides, the expression, “the host or tumult of the mountains comes from the hills,” would be singularly tautological. These reasons are enough to show that הָרִים cannot be a genitive dependent on הָמוֹן, but must be taken as co-ordinate with מַגְבְּעוֹת, so that the preposition מִן will have to be repeated before הָרִים. But הָמוֹן must be the subject of the clause, else there would be no subject at all. הָמוֹן means bustle, eager crowd, tumult, noise, and is also used of the surging mass of earthly possessions or riches, Ps. xxxvii. 16, Isa. lx. 5. Schnur., Ros., Maur., de W., have preferred the last meaning,

and have put the sense thus: *vana est ex collibus, vana ex montibus affluentia*, or: delusive is the abundance that comes from the hills, from the mountains. This view is not to be overthrown by Graf's objection, that we cannot here entertain the idea of abundance, however imaginary, acquired by the Israelites through idolatry, seeing that in the next verses it is declared that the false gods have devoured the wealth which the Israelites had inherited and received from God. For in the present connection the abundance would be not a real but expected or imagined abundance, the delusiveness of which would be shown in the next verse by the statement that the false gods had devoured the acquisitions of Israel. But to take הָמֹן in the sense of *affluentia* seems questionable here, when the context makes no reference to wealth or earthly riches, and where the abundance of the hills and mountains cannot be understood to mean their produce; the abundance is that which the idolatry practised upon the hills and mountains brought or was expected to bring to the people. Hence, along with Ew., we take this word in the sig. tumult or noise, and by it we understand the wild uproarious orgies of idolatry, which, according to vers. 2 and 6, were practised on the hills and mountains (הָמֹן, ver. 9). Thus we obtain the sense already given by the Targ.: *in vanum coluimus super collibus et non in utilitatem congregavimus nos* (אֲתִרְגְּמִנָא, prop. *tumultuati sumus*) *super montibus, i.e.* delusive and profitless were our idolatrous observances upon the heights.

In ver. 24 we are told in what particulars idolatry became to them לְשֹׁקֶר הַבִּשְׁת, the shame, opprobrious expression for הַבִּעַל, equal to shame-god, cf. xi. 13 and Hos. ix. 10; since the worship of Baal, *i.e.* of the false gods, resulted in disgrace to the people. He devoured the wealth of our fathers, namely, their sheep and oxen, mentioned as a specimen of their wealth, and their sons and daughters. The idols devoured this wealth, not in respect that sheep and oxen, and, on Moloch's altar, children too, were sacrificed, for sheep and oxen were offered to Jahveh; but because idolatry drew down judgments on the people and brought about the devastation of the land by enemies who devoured the substance of the people, and slew sons and daughters, Deut. xxviii. 30, 33. From our youth on;—the youth of the people is the period of the judges.—Ver. 25. The

people does not repudiate this shame and disgrace, but is willing to endure it patiently, since by its sin it has fully deserved it. **לִשְׁכַּבְּהָ**, not: we lie, but: we will lay us down in our shame, as a man in pain and grief throws himself on the ground, or on his couch (cf. 2 Sam. xii. 16, xiii. 31, 1 Kings xxi. 4), in order wholly to give way to the feelings that crush him down. And let our disgrace cover us, *i.e.* enwrap us as a mourning robe or cloak; cf. Ps. xxxv. 26, cix. 29, Mic. vii. 10, Obad. ver. 10.

Chap. iv. 1, 2. *The answer of the Lord.*—Ver. 1. “If thou returnest, Israel, saith Jahveh, returnest to me; and if thou putttest away thine abominations from before my face, and strayest not, Ver. 2. And swearest, As Jahveh liveth, in truth, with right, and uprightness; then shall the nations bless themselves in Him, and in Him make their boast.” Graf errs in taking these verses as a wish: if thou wouldst but repent . . . and swear . . . and if they blessed themselves. His reason is, that the conversion and reconciliation with Jahveh has not yet taken place, and are yet only hoped for; and he cites passages for **אִם** with the force of a wish, as Gen. xiii. 3, xxviii. 13, where, however, **אִם** or **וְאִם** is joined with it. But if we take all the verbs in the same construction, we get a very cumbrous result; and the reason alleged proceeds upon a prosaic misconception of the dramatic nature of the prophet’s mode of presentation from iii. 21 onwards. Just as there the prophet hears in spirit the penitent supplication of the people, so here he hears the Lord’s answer to this supplication, by inward vision seeing the future as already present. The early commentators have followed the example of the LXX. and Vulg. in construing the two verses differently, and take **אִם** and **וְאִם** as apodoses: if thou returnest, Israel, then return to me; or, if thou, Israel, returnest to me, then shalt thou return, *sc.* into thy fatherland; and if thou putttest away thine abominations from before mine eyes, then shalt thou no longer wander; and if thou swearest . . . then will they bless themselves. But by reason of its position after **יְהוָה יְהוָה** it is impossible to connect **אִם** with the protasis. It would be more natural to take **אִם** as apodosis, the **אִם** being put first for the sake of emphasis. But if we take it as apodosis at all, the apodosis of the second half of the verse does not rightly corre-

spond to that of the first half. **לֹא תָנוּד** would need to be translated, "then shalt thou no longer wander without fixed habitation," and so would refer to the condition of the people as exiled. But for this **נָדָה** is not a suitable expression. Besides, it is difficult to justify the introduction of **אֵם** before **וַיִּשָּׁבְעוּ**, since an apodosis has already preceded. For these reasons we are bound to prefer the view of Ew. and Hitz., that vers. 1 and 2a contain nothing but protases. The removal of the abominations from before God's face is the utter extirpation of idolatry, the negative moment of the return to the Lord; and the swearing by the life of Jahveh is added as a positive expression of their acknowledgment of the true God. **תָּנוּד** is the wandering of the idolatrous people after this and the other false god, ii. 23 and iii. 13. "And strayest not" serves to strengthen "puttest away thine abominations." A sincere return to God demanded not only the destruction of images and the suppression of idol-worship, but also the giving up of all wandering after idols, *i.e.* seeking or longing after other gods. Similarly, swearing by Jahveh is strengthened by the additions: **בְּאֱמֶת**, in truth, not deceptively (**לִשְׁקֶר**, v. 2), and with right and uprightness, *i.e.* in a just cause, and with honest intentions.—The promise, "they shall bless themselves," etc., has in it an allusion to the patriarchal promises in Gen. xii. 3, xviii. 18, xxii. 18, xxvi. 4, xxviii. 14, but it is not, as most commentators, following Jerome, suppose, a direct citation of these, and certainly not "a learned quotation from a book" (Ew.), in which case **בּוֹ** would be referable, as in those promises, to Israel, the seed of Abraham, and would stand for **בְּךָ**. This is put out of the question by the parallel **וּבּוֹ יִתְהַלְּלוּ**, which never occurs but with the sense of glorying in God the Lord; cf. Isa. xli. 16, Ps. xxxiv. 3, lxiv. 11, cv. 3, and Jer. ix. 22. Hence it follows that **בּוֹ** must be referred, as Calv. refers it, to **יְהוָה**, just as in Isa. lxv. 16: the nations will bless themselves in or with Jahveh, *i.e.* will desire and appropriate the blessing of Jahveh and glory in the true God. Even under this acceptation, the only one that can be justified from an exegetical point of view, the words stand in manifest relation to the patriarchal blessing. If the heathen peoples bless themselves in the name of Jahveh, then are they become partakers of the salvation

that comes from Jahveh; and if this blessing comes to them as a consequence of the true conversion of Israel to the Lord, as a fruit of this, then it has come to them through Israel as the channel, as the patriarchal blessings declare *disertis verbis*. Jeremiah does not lay stress upon this intermediate agency of Israel, but leaves it to be indirectly understood from the unmistakeable allusion to the older promise. The reason for the application thus given by Jeremiah to the divine promise made to the patriarchs is found in the aim and scope of the present discourse. The appointment of Israel to be the channel of salvation for the nations is an outcome of the calling grace of God, and the fulfilment of this gracious plan on the part of God is an exercise of the same grace—a grace which Israel by its apostasy does not reject, but helps onwards towards its ordained issue. The return of apostate Israel to its God is indeed necessary ere the destined end be attained; it is not, however, the ground of the blessing of the nations, but only one means towards the consummation of the divine plan of redemption, a plan which embraces all mankind. Israel's apostasy delayed this consummation; the conversion of Israel will have for its issue the blessing of the nations.

Chap. iv. 3-31. THREATENING OF JUDGMENT UPON JERUSALEM AND JUDAH.—If Judah and Jerusalem do not reform, the wrath of God will be inevitably kindled against them (vers. 3, 4). Already the prophet sees in spirit the judgment bursting in upon Judah from the north, to the dismay of all who were accounting themselves secure (vers. 5-10). Like a hot tempest-blast it rushes on, because of the wickedness of Jerusalem (vers. 11-18), bringing desolation and ruin on the besotted people, devastating the whole land, and not to be turned aside by any meretricious devices (vers. 19-31).

Ver. 3. "For thus hath Jahveh spoken to the men of Judah and to Jerusalem: Break up for yourselves new ground, and sow not among thorns. Ver. 4. Circumcise yourselves to Jahveh, and take away the foreskins of your heart, men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, lest my fury break forth like fire and burn unquenchably, because of the evil of your doings." The exhortation to a reformation of life is attached by וְ, as being

the ground of it, to the preceding exhortation to return. The אִם הָשֹׁב, ver. 1, contained the indirect call to repent. In ver. 1 this was addressed to Israel. In ver. 3 the call comes to Judah, which the prophet had already in his eye in chap. iii.; cf. iii. 7, 8, 10, 11. The transition from Israel to Judah in the phrase: *for thus saith Jahveh*, is explained by the introduction of a connecting thought, which can without difficulty be supplied from the last clause of ver. 2; the promise that the nations bless themselves in Jahveh will come to be fulfilled. The thought to be supplied is: this conversion is indispensable for Judah also, for Judah too must begin a new life. Without conversion there is no salvation. The evil of their doings brings nought but heavy judgments with it. אִשׁ, as often, in collective sense, since the plural of this word was little in use, see in Josh. ix. 6. נִיר לֹו נִיר, as in Hos. x. 12, plough up new land, to bring new untilled soil under cultivation—a figure for the reformation of life; as much as to say, to prepare new ground for living on, to begin a new life. Sow not among thorns. The seed-corns are the good resolutions which, when they have sunk into the soil of the mind, should spring up into deeds (Hitz.). The thorns which choke the good seed as it grows (Mat. xiii. 7) are not *mala vestra studia* (Ros.), but the evil inclinations of the unrenewed heart, which thrive luxuriantly like thorns. “Circumcise you to the Lord” is explained by the next clause: remove the foreskins of your heart. The stress lies in לִיהוה; in this is implied that the circumcision should not be in the flesh merely. In the flesh all Jews were circumcised. If they then are called to circumcise themselves to the Lord, this must be meant spiritually, of the putting away of the spiritual impurity of the heart, *i.e.* of all that hinders the sanctifying of the heart; see in Deut. x. 16. The plur. עֲרֻלֹת is explained by the figurative use of the word, and the reading עֲרֻלָּה, presented by some codd., is a correction from Deut. x. 16. The foreskins are the evil lusts and longings of the heart. Lest my fury break forth like fire; cf. vii. 20, Amos v. 6, Ps. lxxxix. 47. מִפְּנֵי רָעַ מִ as in Deut. xxviii. 20. This judgment of wrath the prophet already in spirit sees breaking on Judah.

Vers. 5–10. *From the north destruction approaches.*—Ver. 5. “Proclaim in Judah, and in Jerusalem let it be heard, and say,

Blow the trumpet in the land; cry with a loud voice, and say, Assemble, and let us go into the defenced cities. Ver. 6. Raise a standard toward Zion: save yourselves by flight, linger not: for from the north I bring evil and great destruction. Ver. 7. A lion comes up from his thicket, and a destroyer of the nations is on his way, comes forth from his place, to make thy land a waste, that thy cities be destroyed, without an inhabitant. Ver. 8. For this gird you in sackcloth, lament and howl, for the heat of Jahveh's anger hath not turned itself from us. Ver. 9. And it cometh to pass on that day, saith Jahveh, the heart of the king and the heart of the princes shall perish, and the priests shall be confounded and the prophets amazed." The invasion of a formidable foe is here represented with poetic animation; the inhabitants being called upon to publish the enemy's approach throughout the land, so that every one may hide himself in the fortified cities.¹ The ו before אֶפְרַיִם

¹ By this dreaded foe the older commentators understand the Chaldeans; but some of the moderns will have it that the Scythians are meant. Among the latter are Dahler, Hitz., Ew., Bertheau (z. *Gesch. der Isr.*), Movers, and others; and they have been preceded by Eichhorn (*Hebr. Proph.* ii. 96 f), Cramer (in the Comm. on Zephaniah, under the title *Scythische Denkmäler in Palästina*, 1777). On the basis of their hypothesis, M. Duncker (*Gesch. des Alterth.* S. 751 ff.) has sketched out a minute picture of the inundation of Palestine by hordes of Scythian horsemen in the year 626, according to the prophecies of Jeremiah and Zephaniah. For this there is absolutely no historical support, although Roesch in his archæological investigations on Nabopolassar (*Deutsch-morgld. Ztschr.* xv. S. 502 ff.), who, according to him, was a Scythian king, alleges that "pretty nearly all (?) exegetical authorities" understand these prophecies of the Scythians (S. 536). For this view can be neither justified exegetically nor made good historically, as has been admitted and proved by A. Kueper (*Jerem. libr. ss. int.* p. 13 sq.), and Ad. Strauss (*Vaticin. Zeph.* p. xviii. sq.), and then by Tholuck (*die Propheten u. ihre Weiss.* S. 94 ff.), Graf (*Jer.* S. 16 ff.), Näg., and others. On exegetical grounds the theory is untenable; for in the descriptions of the northern foe, whose invasion of Judah Zephaniah and Jeremiah threaten, there is not the faintest hint that can be taken to point to the Scythian squadrons, and, on the contrary, there is much that cannot be suitable to these wandering hordes. The enemies approaching like clouds, their chariots like the whirlwind, with horses swifter than eagles (*Jer.* iv. 13), every city fleeing from the noise of the horsemen and of the bowmen (iv. 29), and the like, go to form a description obviously founded on Deut. xxviii. 49 ff., and on the account of the Chaldeans (בְּשָׂרֵי) in Hab. i. 7-11,—a fact which leads Roesch to suppose Habakkuk meant Scythian by בְּשָׂרֵי.

in the *Chet.* has evidently got into the text through an error in transcription, and the *Keri*, according to which all the old versions translate, is the only correct reading. "Blow the trumpet in the land," is that which is to be proclaimed or published, and the blast into the far-sounding שופר is the signal of alarm by which the people was made aware of the danger that threatened it; cf. Joel ii. 1, Hos. v. 8. The second clause expresses the same matter in an intensified form and

All the Asiatic world-powers had horsemen, war-chariots, and archers, and we do not know that the Scythians fought on chariots. Nor was it at all according to the plan of Scythian hordes to besiege cities and carry the vanquished people into exile, as Jeremiah prophesies of these enemies. Again, in chap. xxv., where he expressly names Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babel as the fulfiller of judgment foretold, Jeremiah mentions the enemy in the same words as in i. 15, כָּל-מִשְׁפַּחַת יָצֵן (xxv. 9), and represents the accomplishment of judgment by Nebuchadnezzar as the fulfilment of all the words he had been prophesying since the 13th year of Josiah. This makes it as clear as possible that Jeremiah regarded the Chaldeans as the families of the peoples of the north who were to lay Judah waste, conquer Jerusalem, and scatter its inhabitants amongst the heathen. In a historical reference, also, the Scythian theory is quite unfounded. The account in Herod. i. 103-105 of the incursion of the Scythians into Media and of dominion exercised over Asia for 28 years by them, does say that they came to Syrian Palestine and advanced on Egypt, but by means of presents were induced by King Psammetichus to withdraw, that they marched back again without committing any violence, and that only *ολίγοι τινές αὐτῶν* plundered the temple of Venus Urania at Ascalon on the way back. But these accounts, taken at their strict historical value, tell us nothing more than that one swarm of the Scythian hordes, which overspread Media and Asia Minor, entered Palestine and penetrated to the borders of Egypt, passing by the ancient track of armies across the Jordan at Bethshan, and through the plain of Jezreel along the Philistine coast; that here they were bought off by Psammetichus and retired without even so much as touching on the kingdom of Judah on their way. The historical books of the Old Testament have no knowledge whatever of any incursion into Judah of Scythians or other northern nations during the reign of Josiah. On the other hand, we give no weight to the argument that the march of the Scythians through Syria against Egypt had taken place in the 7th or 8th year of Josiah, a few years before Jeremiah's public appearance, and so could be no subject for his prophecies (Thol., Graf, Nög.). For the chronological data of the ancients as to the Scythian invasion are not so definite that we can draw confident conclusions from them; cf. M. v. Niebuhr, *Ges. Assurs u. Babels*, S. 67 ff.

All historical evidence for a Scythian inroad into Judah being thus en-

with plainer words. Cry, make full (the crying), *i.e.* cry with a full clear voice; gather, and let us go into the fortified cities; cf. viii. 14. This was the meaning of the trumpet blast. Raise a banner pointing towards Zion, *i.e.* showing the fugitives the way to Zion as the safest stronghold in the kingdom. בז, a lofty pole with a waving flag (Isa. xxxiii. 23; Ezek. xxvii. 7), erected upon mountains, spread the alarm farther than even the sound of the pealing trumpet; see in Isa. v. 26. וְעָנָה,

tirely wanting, the supporters of this hypothesis can make nothing of any point save the Greek name Scythopolis for Bethshan, which Dunck. calls "a memorial for Judah of the Scythian raid." We find the name in Judges i. 27 of the LXX., Βαιθαν ἥ ἐστὶ Σκυθῶν πόλις, and from this come the Σκυθόπολις of Judith iii. 10, 2 Macc. xii. 29, and in Joseph. *Antt.* v. 1. 22, xii. 8. 5, etc. Even if we do not hold, as Reland, *Pal. ill.* p. 992, does, that the gloss, ἥ ἐστὶ Σκυθῶν πόλις, Judges i. 27, has been interpolated late into the LXX.; even if we admit that it originated with the translator, the fact that the author of the LXX., who lived 300 years after Josiah, interpreted Σκυθόπολις by Σκυθῶν πόλις, does by no means prove that the city had received this Greek name from a Scythian invasion of Palestine, or from a colony of those Scythians who had settled down there. The Greek derivation of the name shows that it could not have originated before the extension of Greek supremacy in Palestine—not before Alexander the Great. But there is no historical proof that Scythians dwelt in Bethshan. Duncker *e.g.* makes the inference simply from the name Σκυθῶν πόλις and Σκυθοπολίταις, 2 Macc. xii. 29 f. His statement: "Josephus (*Antt.* xii. 5. 8) and Pliny (*Hist. n.* v. 16) affirm that Scythians had settled down there," is wholly unfounded. In Joseph. *l.c.* there is no word of it; nor will a critical historian accept as sufficient historical evidence of an ancient Scythian settlement in Bethshan, Pliny's *l.c.* aphoristic notice: *Scythopolin (antea Nysam a Libero Patre, sepulta nutrice ibi) Scythis deductis*. The late Byzantine author, George Syncellus, is the first to derive the name Scythopolis from the incursion of the Scythians into Palestine; cf. Reland, p. 993. The origin of the name is obscure, but is not likely to be found, as by Reland, Gesen., etc., in the neighbouring Succoth. More probably it comes from a Jewish interpretation of the prophecy of Ezekiel, chap. xxxix. 11, regarding the overthrow of Gog in the valley of the wanderers eastwards from the sea. This is Hävernicks's view, suggested by Bochart.

Taking all into consideration, we see that the reference of our prophecy to the Scythians is founded neither on exegetical results nor on historical evidence, but wholly on the rationalistic prejudice that the prophecies of the biblical prophets are nothing more than either disguised descriptions of historical events or threatenings of results that lay immediately before the prophet's eyes, which is the view of Hitz., Ew., and others.

secure your possessions by flight; cf. Isa. x. 31. The evil which Jahveh is bringing on the land is specified by שָׁבֵר גְּדֹלַם, after Zeph. i. 10, but very frequently used by Jeremiah; cf. vi. 1, xlviii. 3, l. 22, li. 54. שָׁבֵר, breaking (of a limb), Lev. xxi. 19, then the upbreking of what exists, ruin, destruction. In ver. 7 the evil is yet more fully described. A lion is come up from his thicket (סִבְבֵּי with *dag. forte dirim.*, from סִבֵּי [שׁוֹבֵי, 2 Sam. xviii. 9], or from סִבֵּי, Ps. lxxiv. 5; cf. Ew. § 255, *d*, and Olsh. § 155, *b*), going forth for prey. This lion is a destroyer of the nations (not merely of individual persons as the ordinary lion); he has started (נָסַע, of striking tents for the march), and is come out to waste the land and to destroy the cities. The infin. is continued by the *temp. fin.* הַשְׁמִינָה, and the Kal of נָצַח is here used in a passive sense: to be destroyed by war.—Ver. 8. For this calamity the people was to mourn deeply. For the description of the mourning, cf. Joel i. 13, Mic. i. 8. For the wrath of the Lord has not turned from us, as in blind self-delusion ye imagine, ii. 35. The heat of Jahveh's anger is the burning wrath on account of the sins of Manasseh, with which the people has been threatened by the prophets. This wrath has not turned itself away, because even under Josiah the people has not sincerely returned to its God.—Ver. 9. When this wrath bursts over them, the rulers and leaders of the people will be perplexed and helpless. The heart, *i.e.* the mind, is lost. For this use of לֵב, cf. Job xii. 3, xxxiv. 10, Prov. vii. 7, etc. נִשְׁמָו, be paralyzed by terror, like the Kal in ii. 12. The prophets are mentioned last, because ver. 10 cites a word of prophecy whereby they seduced the people into a false security.

Ver. 10. "Then said I, Ah, Lord Jahveh, truly Thou hast deceived this people and Jerusalem in saying, Peace shall be to you, and the sword is reaching unto the soul." This verse is to be taken as a sigh addressed to God by Jeremiah when he heard the announcement of the judgment about to fall on Judah, contained in vers. 5–9. The Chald. has well paraphrased נֹאמַר thus: *et dixi: suscipe deprecationem meam, Jahveh, Deus.* But Hensler and Ew. wish to have נֹאמַר changed to וְנֹאמַר, "so that they say," quite unnecessarily, and indeed unsuitably, since הִשְׁמַנְתָּ, thou hast deceived, is out of place either in the mouth of the people or of the lying prophets. That the

word quoted, "Peace shall be to you," is the saying of the false prophets, may be gathered from the context, and this is directly supported by xiv. 13, xxiii. 17. The deception of the people by such discourse from the false prophets is referred back to God: "Lord, Thou hast deceived," inasmuch as God not only permits these lying spirits to appear and work, but has ordained them and brought them forth for the hardening of the people's heart; as He once caused the spirit of prophecy to inspire as a lying spirit the prophets of Ahab, so that by promises of victory they prevailed upon him to march to that war in which, as a punishment for his godlessness, he was to perish; 1 Kings xxii. 20-23. Umbr. takes the words less correctly as spoken in the name of the people, to whom the unexpected turn affairs had now taken seemed a deception on the part of God; and this, although it was by itself it had been deceived, through its revolt from God. For it is not the people's opinion that Jeremiah expresses, but a truth concerning which his wish is that the people may learn to recognise it, and so come to reflect and repent before it be too late. On the use of the *perf. consec.* וַיִּנָּעַר, see Ew. § 342, b. As to the fact, cf. v. 18, Ps. lxix. 2.

Vers. 11-18. *Description of the impending ruin, from which nothing can save but speedy repentance.*—Ver. 11. "At that time shall it be said to this people and to Jerusalem, A hot wind from the bleak hills in the wilderness cometh on the way toward the daughter of my people, not to winnow and not to cleanse. Ver. 12. A wind fuller than for this shall come to me; now will I also utter judgments upon them. Ver. 13. Behold, like clouds it draws near, and like the storm are its chariots, swifter than eagles its horses. Woe unto us! for we are spoiled. Ver. 14. Wash from wickedness thy heart, Jerusalem, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thine iniquitous thoughts lodge within thee? Ver. 15. For a voice declareth from Dan, and publisheth affliction from the Mount Ephraim. Ver. 16. Tell it to the peoples; behold, publish it to Jerusalem: Besiegers come from a far country, and let their voice ring out against the cities of Judah. Ver. 17. As keepers of a field, they are against her round about; for against me hath she rebelled, saith Jahveh. Ver. 18. Thy way and thy doings

have wrought thee this. This is thy wickedness; yea, it is bitter, yea, it reacheth unto thine heart."

A more minute account of the impending judgment is introduced by the phrase: at that time. It shall be said to this people; in other words, it shall be said of this people; substantially, that shall fall upon it which is expressed by the figure following, a hot wind blowing from the naked hills of the wilderness. רוח is *stat. constr.*, and שפאים its genitive, after which latter the adjective צר should be placed; but it is interpolated between the *nomen regens* and the *n. rectum* by reason of its smallness, and partly, too, that it may not be too far separated from its *nomen*, while צמרבר belongs to שפאים. The wind blowing from the bleak hills in the wilderness, is the very severe east wind of Palestine. It blows in incessant gusts, and cannot be used for winnowing or cleansing the grain, since it would blow away chaff and seed together; cf. Wetzst. in Del., *Job*, S. 320. הנה is universally taken adverbially: is on the way, *i.e.* comes, moves in the direction of the daughter of Zion. The daughter of Zion is a personification of the inhabitants of Zion or Jerusalem. This hot blast is a figure for the destruction which is drawing near Jerusalem. It is not a chastisement to purify the people, but a judgment which will sweep away the whole people, carry away both wheat and chaff—a most effective figure for the approaching catastrophe of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the carrying away captive of its inhabitants. Hitz. and Graf have, however, taken הנה as subject of the clause: the path, *i.e.* the behaviour of my people, is a keen wind of the bare hills in the wilderness. Thus the conduct of the people would be compared with that wind as unprofitable, inasmuch as it was altogether windy, empty, and further as being a hurtful storm. But the comparison of the people's behaviour with a parched violent wind is a wholly unnatural one, for the justification of which it is not sufficient to point to Hos. viii. 7: sow wind and reap storm. Besides, upon this construction of the illustration, the description: not to winnow and not to cleanse, is not only unmeaning, but wholly unsuitable. Who is to be winnowed and cleansed by the windy ways of the people? Jahveh?! Ver. 14 is indeed so managed by Hitz. and Graf that the tempestuous wind blows against God,

"is directed against Jahveh like a blast of defiance and hostility." But this argument is sufficient to overthrow that unnatural view of the figure, which, besides, obtains no support from ver. 12. מֵאֵלָה cannot refer to בְּתֶ-עָמִי: a full wind from these, *i.e.* the sons of my people; and יָבוֹא לִי, in spite of the passages, xxii. 23, l. 26, li. 48, Job iii. 25, does not mean: comes towards me, or: blows from them on me; for in all these passages לִי is *dativ. commodi* or *incommodi*. Here, too, לִי is dative, used of the originator and efficient cause. The wind comes for me,—in plainer English: from me. Properly: it comes to God, *i.e.* at His signal, to carry out His will. מֵלֵא מֵאֵלָה is comparative: fuller than these, namely, the winds useful for winnowing and cleansing. Now will I *too* utter. The intensifying נָם does not point to a contrast in the immediately preceding clause: because the people blows against God like a strong wind, He too will utter judgment against it. The נָם refers back to the preceding לִי: the storm comes from me; for now will I on my side hold judgment with them. The contrast implied in נָם lies in the wider context, in the formerly described behaviour of the people, particularly in the sayings of the false prophets mentioned in ver. 10, that there will be peace. On דָּבַר מְשַׁפְּטִים, cf. i. 16.

These judgments are already on the way in ver. 13. "Like clouds it draws near." The subject is not mentioned, but a hostile army is meant, about to execute God's judgments. "Like clouds," *i.e.* in such thick dark masses; cf. Ezek. xxxviii. 16. The war-chariots drive with the speed of the tempest; cf. Isa. v. 28, lxvi. 15. The running of the horses resembles the flight of the eagle; cf. Hab. i. 8, where the same is said of the horsemen of the hostile people. Both passages are founded on Deut. xxviii. 49; but Jeremiah, while he had the expression קָלָו מִנְּמִרִים סוּפִיו, Hab. i. 8, in his mind, chose נְשָׁרִים instead of leopards (נְמִרִים), in this following the original in Deut.; cf. 2 Sam. i. 23 and Lam. iv. 19. Already is heard the cry of woe: we are spoiled; cf. ver. 20, ix. 18, xlviii. 1.—Ver. 14. If Jerusalem wishes to be saved, it must thoroughly turn from its sin, wash its heart clean; not merely abstain outwardly from wickedness, but renounce the evil desires of the heart. In the question: How long shall . . . remain? we have

implied the thought that Jerusalem has already only too long cherished and indulged wicked thoughts. הָלֵךְ is 3d pers. imperf. Kal, not 2d pers. Hiph. : wilt thou let remain (Schnur. and others). For the Hiphil of לָךְ is not in use, and besides, would need to be הָלֵכְךָ. The מַחֲשָׁבוֹת אָנֹכִי, as in Prov. vi. 18, Isa. lix. 7, refer chiefly to sins against one's neighbour, such as are reckoned up in vii. 5 f., 8 f.—Ver. 15. It is high time to cleanse oneself from sin, *periculum in mora est*; for already calamity is announced from Dan, even from the Mount Ephraim. קוֹל מִצִּיֹּר, the voice of him who gives the alarm, sc. הַשָּׁמַע, is heard; cf. iii. 21, xxxi. 15. That of which the herald gives warning is not given till the next clause. אָסִי, mischief, i.e. calamity. מִשְׁמַע is still dependent on קוֹל. "From Dan," i.e. the northern boundary of Palestine; see on Judg. xx. 1. "From Mount Ephraim," i.e. the northern boundary of the kingdom of Judah, not far distant from Jerusalem. The alarm and the calamity draw ever nearer. "The messenger comes from each successive place towards which the foe approaches" (Hitz.). In ver. 16 the substance of the warning message is given, but in so animated a manner, that a charge is given to make the matter known to the peoples and in Jerusalem. Tell to the peoples, behold, cause to be heard. The הִנֵּה in the first clause points forward, calling attention to the message in the second clause. A similar charge is given in ver. 5, only "to the peoples" seems strange here. "The meaning would be simple if we could take 'the peoples' to be the Israelites," says Graf. But since גוֹיִם in this connection can mean only the other nations, the question obtrudes itself: to what end the approach of the besiegers of Jerusalem should be proclaimed to the heathen peoples. Jerome remarks on this: *Vult omnes in circuitu nationes Dei nosse sententiam, et flagellatâ Jerusalem cunctos recipere disciplinam*. In like manner, Chr. B. Mich., following Schmid: *Gentibus, ut his quoque innotescat severitatis divinæ in Judæos exemplum*. Hitz. and Gr. object, that in what follows there is no word of the taking and destruction of Jerusalem, but only of the siege; that this could form no such *exemplum*, and that for this the issue must be awaited. But this objection counts for little. After the description given of the enemies (cf. ver. 13), there can be no doubt as to the issue of the siege, that is, as to the

taking of Jerusalem. But if this be so, then the warning of the heathen as to the coming catastrophe, by holding the case of Jerusalem before them, is not so far-fetched a thought as that it should be set aside by Hitz.'s remark: "So friendly an anxiety on behalf of the heathen is utterly unnatural to a Jew, especially seeing that the prophet is doubly absorbed by anxiety for his own people." Jeremiah was not the narrow-minded Jew Hitz. takes him for. Besides, there is no absolute necessity for holding "Tell to the peoples" to be a warning of a similar fate addressed to the heathen. The charge is but a rhetorical form, conveying the idea that there is no doubt about the matter to be published, and that it concerned not Jerusalem alone, but the nations too. This objection settled, there is no call to seek other interpretations, especially as all such are less easily justified. By changing the imper. הַנְּקִירִי and הַשְּׁמִיעִי into perfects, Ew. obtains the translation: "they say already to the peoples, behold, they come, already they proclaim in Jerusalem," etc.; but Hitz. and Graf have shown the change to be indefensible. Yet more unsatisfactory is the translation, "declare of the heathen," which Hitz. and Graf have adopted, following the LXX., Kimchi, Vat., and others. This destroys the parallelism, it is out of keeping with the הִנֵּה, and demands the addition (with the LXX.) of בָּאוּ thereto to complete the sense. Graf and Hitz. have not been able to agree upon the sense of the second member of the verse. If we make לְגוֹתֵי *de gentibus*, then הַשְּׁמִיעִי וגו' ought to be: proclaim upon (*i.e.* concerning) Jerusalem. Hitz., however, translates, in accordance with the use of מִשְׁמִיעַ in vers. 5 and 15: Cry it aloud in Jerusalem (prop. over Jerusalem, Ps. xlix. 12, Hos. viii. 1); but this, though clearly correct, does not correspond to the first part of the verse, according to Hitz.'s translation of it. Graf, on the other hand, gives: Call them (the peoples) out against Jerusalem—a translation which, besides completely destroying the parallelism of the two clauses, violently separates from the proclamation the thing proclaimed: Besiegers come, etc. Nor can הַשְּׁמִיעִי be taken in the sense: call together, as in l. 29, li. 27, 1 Kings xv. 22; for in that case the object could not be omitted, those who are to be called together would need to be mentioned; and it is too much to assume גוֹת from the לְגוֹתֵי for

an object. The warning cry to Jerusalem runs : לְצָרִים, besiegers, (acc. to Isa. i. 8) come from the far country (cf. v. 15), and give their voice (cf. ii. 15); *i.e.* let the tumult of a besieging army echo throughout the cities of Judah. These besiegers will be like field-keepers round about Jerusalem (עֲלִיָּהּ refers back to Jerus.), like field-keepers they will pitch their tents round the city (cf. i. 15) to blockade it. For against me (Jahveh) was she refractory (מָרָה *c. acc. pers.*, elsewhere with מָרָה, Hos. xiv. 1, Ps. v. 11, or with אָתָּה, Num. xx. 24, and often). This is expanded in ver. 18. Thy way, *i.e.* thy behaviour and thy doings, have wrought thee this (calamity). This is thy wickedness, *i.e.* the effect or fruit of thy wickedness, yea, it is bitter, cf. ii. 19; yea, it reacheth unto thine heart, *i.e.* inflicts deadly wounds on thee.

Vers. 19–26. *Grief at the desolation of the land and the infatuation of the people.*—Ver. 19. “My bowels, my bowels! I am pained! the chambers of my heart—my heart rages within me! I cannot hold my peace! for thou hearest (the) sound of the trumpet, my soul, (the) war-cry. Ver. 20. Destruction upon destruction is called; for spoiled is the whole land; suddenly are my tents spoiled, my curtains in a moment. Ver. 21. How long shall I see (the) standard, hear (the) sound of the trumpet? Ver. 22. For my people is foolish, me they know not; senseless children are they, and without understanding; wise are they to do evil, but to do good they know not. Ver. 23. I look on the earth, and, lo, it is waste and void; and towards the heavens, and there is no light in them. Ver. 24. I look on the mountains, and, lo, they tremble, and all the hills totter. Ver. 25. I look, and, lo, no man is there, and all the fowls of the heavens are fled. Ver. 26. I look, and, lo, Carmel is the wilderness, and all the cities thereof are destroyed before Jahveh, before the heat of His anger.”

To express the misery which the approaching siege of Jerusalem and the cities of Judah is about to bring, the prophet breaks forth into lamentation, vers. 19–21. It is a much debated question, whether the prophet is the speaker, as the Chald. has taken it, *i.e.* whether Jeremiah is uttering his own (subjective) feelings, or whether the people is brought before us speaking, as Grot., Schnur., Hitz., Ew. believe. The

answer is this : the prophet certainly is expressing his personal feelings regarding the nearing catastrophe, but in doing so he lends words to the grief which all the godly will feel. The lament of ver. 20, suddenly are *my* tents spoiled, is unquestionably the lament not of the prophet as an individual, but of the congregation, *i.e.* of the godly among the people, not of the mass of the blinded people. The violence of the grief finds vent in abrupt ejaculations of distress. "My bowels, my bowels!" is the cry of sore pain, for with the Hebrews the bowels are the seat of the deepest feelings. The *Chet.* אֲחֻלָּה is a monstrosity, certainly a copyist's error for אֲחֻלָּה, as it is in many MSS. and edd., from חוּל : I am driven to writhe in agony. The *Keri* אֲחֻלָּה, I will wait (cf. Mic. vii. 7), yields no good sense, and is probably suggested merely by the cohortative form, a cohortative being regarded as out of place in the case of חוּל. But that form may express also the effort to incite one's own volition, and so would here be rendered in English by : I am bound to suffer pain, or must suffer ; cf. Ew. § 228, *a.*—קִירוֹת לִבִּי, prop. the walls of my heart, which quiver as the heart throbs in anguish. הוֹמָה לִי is not to be joined with the last two words as if it were part of the same clause ; in that case we should expect הוֹמָה. But these words too are an ejaculation. The subject of הוֹמָה is the following לִבִּי ; cf. xlvi. 36. In defiance of usage, Hitz. connects לִבִּי with אֲחֻלָּה : my heart can I not put to silence. But this verb in Hiph. means always : be silent, never : put to silence. Not even in Job xi. 3 can it have the latter meaning ; where we have the same verb construed with *acc. rei*, as in Job xli. 4, and where we must translate : at thy harangues shall the people be silent. The heart cannot be silent, because the soul hears the peal of the war-trumpet. שְׁמַעְתִּי is 2d pers. fem., as in ii. 20, 33, and freq., the soul being addressed, as in Ps. xvi. 2 (in אֲמַרְתָּ), Ps. xlii. 6, 12. This apostrophe is in keeping with the agitated tone of the whole verse.—Ver. 20. One destruction after another is heralded (on שָׁבַר, see ver. 6). Ew. translates loosely : wound upon wound meet one another. For the word does not mean wound, but the fracture of a limb ; and it seems inadmissible to follow the Chald. and Syr. in taking נִקְרָא here in the sense of נִקְרָה, since the sig. "meet" does not suit שָׁבַר. The thought is this :

tidings are brought of one catastrophe after another, for the devastation extends itself over the whole land and comes suddenly upon the tents, *i.e.* dwellings of those who are lamenting. Covers, curtains of the tent, is used as synonymous with tents; cf. x. 20, Isa. liv. 2. How long shall I see the standard, etc.! is the cry of despair, seeing no prospect of the end to the horrors of the war. The standard and the sound of the trumpet are, as in ver. 5, the alarm-signals on the approach of the enemy.

There is no prospect of an end to the horrors, for (ver. 22) the people is so foolish that it understands only how to do the evil, but not the good; cf. for this v. 21, Isa. i. 3, Mic. vii. 3. Ver. 21 gives God's answer to the woful query, how long the ravaging of the land by war is to last. The answer is: as long as the people persists in the folly of its rebellion against God, so long will chastising judgments continue. To bring this answer of God home to the people's heart, the prophet, in vers. 23-26, tells what he has seen in the spirit. He has seen (רָאִיתִי, *perf. proph.*) bursting over Judah a visitation which convulses the whole world. The earth seemed waste and void as at the beginning of creation, Gen. i. 2, before the separation of the elements and before the creation of organic and living beings. In heaven no light was to be seen, earth and heaven seemed to have been thrown back into a condition of chaos. The mountains and hills, these firm foundations of the earth, quivered and swayed (הִתְקַלְקַל, be put into a light motion, cf. Nah. i. 5); men had fled and hidden themselves from the wrath of God (cf. Isa. ii. 19, 21), and all the birds had flown out of sight in terror at the dreadful tokens of the beginning catastrophe (ix. 9). The fruitful field was the wilderness,—not a wilderness, but “changed into the wilderness with all its attributes” (Hitz.). הַכְּרִמָּה is not *appell.* as in ii. 7, but *nom. prop.* of the lower slopes of Carmel, famed for their fruitfulness; these being taken as representatives of all the fruitful districts of the land. The cities of the Carmel, or of the fruitful-field, are manifestly not to be identified with the store cities of 1 Kings ix. 19, as Hitz. supposes, but the cities in the most fertile districts of the country, which, by reason of their situation, were in a prosperous condition, but now are destroyed. “Before the heat of His

anger," which is kindled against the foolish and godless race ; cf. Nah. i. 6, Isa. xiii. 13.

Vers. 27-31. *The devastation of Judah, though not its utter annihilation, is irrevocably decreed, and cannot be turned away by any meretricious expedients.*—Ver. 27. "For thus saith Jahveh, A waste shall the whole land be, yet will I not make an utter end. Ver. 28. For this shall the earth mourn, and the heaven above darken, because I have said it, purposed it, and repent it not, neither will I turn back from it. Ver. 29. For the noise of the horseman and bowman every city flees ; they come into thickets, and into clefts of the rock they go up ; every city is forsaken, and no man dwells therein. Ver. 30. And thou, spoiled one, what wilt thou do ? Though thou clothest thyself in purple, though thou deckest thee with ornaments of gold, though thou tearest open thine eyes with paint, in vain thou makest thyself fair ; the lovers despise thee, they seek thy life. Ver. 31. For I hear a voice as of a woman in travail, anguish as of one who bringeth forth her first-born, the voice of the daughter of Zion ; she sigheth, she spreadeth out her hands : Woe is me ! for my soul sinketh powerless beneath murderers."

Vers. 27 and 28 confirm and explain what the prophet has seen in spirit in vers. 23-26. A waste shall the land become ; but the wasting shall not be a thorough annihilation, not such a destruction as befell Sodom and Gomorrah. עֲשָׂה כָּלָה, as in Nah. i. 8 f., Isa. x. 23, and freq. This limitation is yet again in v. 10, 18 made to apply to Jerusalem, as it has done already to the people at large. It is founded on the promise in Lev. xxvi. 44, that the Lord will punish Israel with the greatest severity for its stubborn apostasy from Him, but will not utterly destroy it, so as to break His covenant with it. Accordingly, all prophets declare that after the judgments of punishment, a remnant shall be left, from which a new holy race shall spring ; cf. Amos ix. 8, Isa. vi. 13, xi. 11, 16, x. 20 ff., Mic. ii. 12, v. 6, Zeph. iii. 13, etc. "For this" refers to the first half of ver. 27, and is again resumed in the עַל כֵּן following : for this, because Jahveh hath purposed the desolation of the whole land. The earth mourns, as in Hos. iv. 3, because her productive power is impaired by the ravaging of the land. The heaven blackens itself, *i.e.* shrouds itself in dark clouds

(1 Kings xviii. 45), so as to mourn over the desolated earth. The vividness of the style permits "have decreed it" to be appended as asyndeton to "I have said it," for the sake of greater emphasis. God has not only pronounced the desolation of the land, but God's utterance in this is based upon a decree which God does not repent, and from which He will not turn back. The LXX. have placed the נִחַמְתִּי after אָמַרְתִּי , and have thus obtained a neater arrangement of the clauses; but by this the force of expression in "I have said it, decreed it," is weakened. In ver. 29 the desolation of the land is further portrayed, set forth in ver. 30 as inevitable, and exhibited in its sad consequences in ver. 31. On the approach of the hostile army, all the inhabitants flee into inaccessible places from the clatter or noise of the horsemen and archers. He that casts the bow, the bowman; cf. Ps. lxxviii. 9. כָּל־הָעִיר means, in spite of the article, not the whole city, but every city, all cities, as may be gathered from the כָּל , which points back to this. So frequently before the definite noun, especially when it is further defined by a relative clause, as *e.g.* Ex. i. 22, Dent. iv. 3, 1 Sam. iii. 17; cf. Ew. § 290, *c.* For the first כָּל־הָעִיר the LXX. have $\pi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\alpha\ \eta\ \chi\acute{o}\rho\alpha$, and accordingly J. D. Mich., Hitz., and Graf propose to amend to כָּל־הָעִירִי , so as to avoid "the clumsy repetition." But we cannot be ruled here by æsthetic principles of taste. Clearly the first "every city" means the populace of the cities, and so בָּנָי is: they (*i.e.* the men) come, pouring forth. עָבִים is not here clouds, but, according to its etymology, to be dark, means the dark thickets or woods; cf. the Syr. ܥܒܝܡ , wood. סִלְסִלִּים , rocks, here clefts in the rocks, as is demanded by the בָּ . For this state of things, cf. Isa. ii. 19, 21, and the accounts of Judg. vi. 2, 1 Sam. xiii. 6, where the Israelites hide themselves from the invading Midianites in caves, ravines, thorn-thickets, rocks, and natural fastnesses.—Ver. 30. In vain will Jerusalem attempt to turn away calamity by the wiles of a courtesan. In ver. 31 the daughter of Zion is addressed, *i.e.* the community dwelling around the citadel of Zion, or the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the capital of the kingdom, regarded as a female personality (as to בִּתְּצִיֹן , see on Isa. i. 8). "Spoiled one" is in apposition not to the אִשָּׁה , but to the person in the verb;

it is regarded as adverbial, and so is without inflexion: if thou art spoiled, like עָרִים, Job xxiv. 7, 10; cf. Ew. § 316, *b*. The following clauses introduced by וְ are not so connected with the question, what wilt thou do? as that וְ should mean *that*: what wilt thou do, devise to the end that thou mayest clothe thee? (Graf); the וְ means *if* or *though*, and introduces new clauses, the apodosis of which is: "in vain," etc. If thou even clothest thyself in purple. וְצִי, the crimson dye, and stuffs or fabrics dyed with it, see in Ex. xxv. 4. פִּיֶּה is a pigment for the eye, prepared from silver-glance, sulphur-antimony—the *Cohol*, yet much esteemed by Arab women, a black powder with a metallic glitter. It is applied to the eyelids, either dry or reduced to a paste by means of oil, by means of a blunt-pointed style or eye-pencil, and increases the lustre of dark eyes so that they seem larger and more brilliant. See the more minute account in Hille, on the eye-paint of the East, in ref. to 2 Kings ix. 30. קָרַע, tear asunder, not, prick, puncture, as Ew., following J. D. Mich., makes it. This does not answer the mode of using the eye-paint, which was this: the style rubbed over with the black powder is drawn horizontally through between the closed eyelids, and these are thus smeared with the ointment. This proceeding Jeremiah sarcastically terms rending open the eyes. As a wife seeks by means of paint and finery to heighten the charms of her beauty in order to please men and gain the favour of lovers, so the woman Jerusalem will attempt by like stratagems to secure the favour of the enemy; but in vain, like Jezebel in 2 Kings ix. 30. The lovers will despise her. The enemies are called lovers, paramours, just as Israel's quest for help amongst the heathen nations is represented as intrigue with them; see on ii. 33, 36.—Ver. 31, as giving a reason, is introduced by כִּי. Zion's attempts to secure the goodwill of the enemy are in vain, for already the prophet hears in spirit the agonized cry of the daughter of Zion, who beseechingly stretches out her hands for help, and falls exhausted under the assassin's strokes. הוֹלָה, *partic. Kal fœm.* from הָלָה; see Ew. § 151, *b*, and Gesen. § 72, Rem. 1. צָרָה, in parallelism with קָל and dependent on "I hear," means cry of anguish. הִתְיַבֵּה, breathe heavily, pant, sigh. הִתְפַּרֵּשׁ is joined asynd. with the preceding word, but is in sense subordinate to it: she sighs with hands spread out;

a pleading gesture expressing a prayer for protection. נָפַץ, be exhausted, here = sink down, faint, succumb to the murderers.

Chap. v. THE CAUSES WHICH CALLED DOWN THE JUDGMENT PRONOUNCED: THE TOTAL CORRUPTION OF THE PEOPLE.—Chr. B. Mich. has excellently summed up thus the contents of this chapter: *Deus judicia sua, quæ cap. IV. prædixerat, justificat ostendens, se quamvis invitum, tamen non aliter posse quam punire Judæos propter præfractam ipsorum malitiam.* The train of thought in this chapter is the following: God would pardon if there were to be found in Jerusalem but one who practised righteousness and strove to keep good faith; but high and low have forsaken God and His law, and serve the false gods. This the Lord must punish (vers. 1–9). Judah, like Israel, disowns the Lord, and despises the words of His prophets; therefore the Lord must affirm His word by deeds of judgment (vers. 10–18). Because they serve the gods of strangers, He will throw them into bondage to strange peoples, that they may learn to fear Him as the Almighty God and Lord of the world, who withholds His benefits from them because their sins keep them far from Him (vers. 19–25); for wickedness and crime have acquired a frightful predominance (vers. 26–31).

Vers. 1–9. *By reason of the universal godlessness and moral corruption the Lord cannot pardon.*—Ver. 1. “Range through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek upon her thoroughfares, if ye find any, if any doth judgment, seeketh after faithfulness, and I will pardon her. Ver. 2. And if they say, ‘As Jahveh liveth,’ then in this they swear falsely. Ver. 3. Jahveh, are not Thine eyes upon faithfulness? Thou smitest them, and they are not pained; thou consumest them, they will take no correction; they make their face harder than rock, they will not turn. Ver. 4. And I thought, It is but the baser sort, they are foolish; for they know not the way of Jahveh, the judgment of their God. Ver. 5. I will get me then to the great, and will speak with them, for they know the way of Jahveh, the judgment of their God; yet together have they broken the yoke, burst the bonds. Ver. 6. Therefore a lion out of the wood smiteth them, a wolf of the deserts

spoilth them, a leopard lieth in wait against their cities : every one that goeth out thence is torn in pieces ; because many are their transgressions, many their backslidings. Ver. 7. Wherefore should I pardon thee ? thy sons have forsaken me, and sworn by them that are no gods. I caused them to swear, but they committed adultery, and crowd into the house of the harlot. Ver. 8. Like well-fed horses, they are roaming about ; each neigheth after the other's wife. Ver. 9. Shall I not punish this ? saith Jahveh ; or shall not my soul be avenged on such a people as this ? ”

The thought of ver. 1, that in Jerusalem there is not to be found one solitary soul who concerns himself about uprightness and sincerity, does not, though rhetorically expressed, contain any rhetorical hyperbole or exaggeration such as may have arisen from the prophet's righteous indignation, or have been inferred from the severity of the expected judgment (Hitz.) ; it gives but the simple truth, as is seen when we consider that it is not Jeremiah who speaks according to the best of his judgment, but God, the searcher of hearts. Before the all-seeing eye of God no man is pure and good. They are all gone astray, and there is none that doeth good, Ps. xiv. 2, 3. And if anywhere the fear of God is the ruling principle, yet when the look falls on the mighty hosts of the wicked, even the human eye loses sight of the small company of the godly, since they are in no case to exert an influence on the moral standing of the whole mass. “ If ye find any ” is defined by, “ if there is a worker of right ; ” and the doing of right or judgment is made more complete by “ that seeketh faithfulness,” the doing being given as the outcome of the disposition. אֱמֻנָה is not truth (אֱמֶת), but sincerity and good faith. On this state of affairs, cf. Hos. iv. 1, Mic. vii. 2, Isa. lxiv. 5f. The pledge that God would pardon Jerusalem if He found but one righteous man in it, recalls Abraham's dealing with God on behalf of Sodom, Gen. xviii. 23. In support of what has been said, it is added in ver. 2, that they even abuse God's name for lying purposes ; cf. Lev. xix. 12. Making oath by the life of Jahveh is not looked on here as a confession of faith in the Lord, giving thus as the sense, that even their worship of God was but the work of the lips, not of the heart (Ros.) ; but the

solemn appeal to the living God for the purpose of setting the impress of truth on the face of a lie, is brought forward as evidence that there is none that strives after sincerity. The antithesis forced in here by Hitz. and Graf is foreign to text and context both, viz. that between swearing by Jahveh and by the false gods, or any other indifferent name. The emphasis lies on swearing לְשׁוּרִי , as opposed to swearing in the way demanded by God, $\text{בְּאֵמֶת וּבְמִשְׁפָּט וּבְדִקְדָּה}$, iv. 2. לָכֵן , therein, *i.e.* yet even in this, or nevertheless.—Ver. 3. The eye of the Lord is directed towards faithfulness, which is not to be found in Jerusalem (ver. 1), לֵב showing the direction toward person or thing, as in Ps. xxxiii. 18, where לֵב alternates with לֵב . Hitz. is wrong in translating: are not thine eyes faithful, *i.e.* directed according to faithfulness; a sense quite unsuitable here, since the matter in hand is not the character or direction of the eye of God, but that on which God looks. But because God desired sincerity, and there was none in the people of Jerusalem, He has smitten them, chastised them, but they felt no pain ($\text{לֹא$ from לֵב , the tone being drawn back by reason of the לֵב); the chastisement made no impression. Thou consumedst them, exterminatedst them, *i.e.* “Thou hast utterly exterminated multitudes and swarms of them” (Hitz.), but they refused to receive correction; cf. ii. 30. They made their face harder than rock, *i.e.* hardened themselves by obstinately setting the divine chastisements at naught; cf. Ezek. iii. 7, 8.—Ver. 4 f. This total want of good faith and uprightness is found not only in the lower orders of the populace, amongst the mean and ignorant rabble, but in the higher ranks of the educated. This is rhetorically put in this shape, that Jeremiah, believing that only the common people are so deeply sunk in immorality, turns to the great to speak to them, and amongst them discovers a thorough-going renunciation of the law of God. לְבָנִים , weak, are the mean and poor of the people, who live from hand to mouth in rudeness and ignorance, their anxieties bent on food and clothing (cf. xxxix. 10, xl. 7). These do foolishly (לְבָנִים as in Num. xii. 11), from want of religious training. They know not the way of Jahveh, *i.e.* the way, the manner of life, prescribed to men by God in His word; cf. 2 Kings xxi. 22, Ps. xxv. 9, etc. The judgment of their God, *i.e.* that

which God demanded as right and lawful, 2 Kings xvii. 26, etc. The great, *i.e.* the wealthy, distinguished, and educated. Yet even these have broken the yoke of the law, *i.e.* have emancipated themselves from obedience to the law (Hitz.); cf. ii. 20. Therefore they must be visited with punishment.—Ver. 6. This verse is neither a threatening of future punishments, nor is to be taken figuratively (lion, bear, leopard, as figures for dreadful enemies). The change from the perf. הָבֵם to the imperf. יִשְׁרְרִים and יִטְרֹף tells against the future construction, showing as it does that the verbs are used aoristically of chastisements which have partly already taken place, which may be partly yet to come. And the figurative explanation of the beasts of prey by hostile peoples—found so early as the Chald.—is not in the least called for by the text; nor is it easy to reconcile it with the specification of various kinds of wild beasts. The words are a case of the threatening of the law in Lev. xxvi. 22, that God will chasten the transgressors of His law by sending beasts of prey which shall rob them of their children. Cf. with the promise, that if they keep His commandments, He will destroy the wild beasts out of the land. Cf. also the fact given in 2 Kings xvii. 25, that God sent lions amongst the heathen colonists who had been transplanted into the depopulated kingdom of the ten tribes, lions which slew some of them, because they served not Jahveh. The true conception of the words is confirmed by Ezek. xiv. 15, when in like manner the sending of evil (ravening) beasts is mentioned as an example of God's punishments. הִכָּה, smite, is a standing expression for the lion's way of striking down his prey with his paws; cf. 1 Kings xx. 36. זֶאֵב עֶרְבוֹת is not wolf of the evening, as Chald., Syr., Hitz. explain it, following Hab. i. 8 and Zeph. iii. 3; for עֶרְבוֹת is not the plural of עֶרֶב, but of עֶרְבָה, steppe: the wolf that lives in the steppe, and thence makes its raids on inhabited spots. The reference of the words to place is suggested plainly by the parallel, the lion out of the wood. The leopard (panther) watches, *i.e.* lies lurking in wait against their cities, to tear those that come out. The panther is wont to lie in wait for his prey, and to spring suddenly out on it; cf. Hos. xiii. 7. With "because many are thy transgressions," cf. xxx. 14 f.

Since these chastisements have profited nothing God cannot pardon the people. This is the meaning of the question in ver. 7, לָמָּה אֶפְדֹּן, wherefore should I then pardon? not, should I then pardon for this? for אֶפְדֹּן by itself does not stand for an *interrog.*, but is set before the *pronom. demonstr.* to give it the force of an interrogative adjective; cf. Ew. § 326, *a*. The *Cheth.* אֶפְדֹּן *est obsoletum adeoque genuinum* (Ros.); the *Keri* substitutes the usual form. To justify the question with a negative answer implied, the people's fall into idolatry is again set up before it in strong colours. Thy sons (the sons of the daughter of Zion, *i.e.* of the national congregation, and so the individual members of the nation; cf. Lev. xix. 18) have forsaken me, and swear by them that are not gods, *i.e.* the idols; cf. ii. 11. For אֶשְׂבֵּעַ אֹתָם, I caused them to swear, the old translators have אֶשְׂבֵּעַ, I filled them to the full, and so it is read in many codd. and edd. This reading is preferred by most of the ancient commentators, and they appeal for a parallel to ver. 28, and Deut. xxxii. 15 ("when Jeshurun waxed fat, he kicked"), Hos. xiii. 6, Neh. ix. 25, etc., where apostasy from God is chidden as a consequence of superfluity of earthly goods. So Luther: "and now that I have filled them full, they committed adultery." Now possibly it is just the recollection of the passages cited that has suggested the reading אֶשְׂבֵּעַ. The apodosis, they committed adultery, forms no antithesis to filling full. Adultery presupposes a marriage vow, or troth plighted by an oath. God caused Israel to swear fidelity when He made the covenant with it at Sinai, Ex. xxiv. This oath Israel repeated at each renewal of the covenant, and last under Josiah: 2 Kings xxiii. 3; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 31 f. Hence we must not wholly restrict the swearing to the conclusion of the covenant at Sinai, nor wholly to the renewal of it under Josiah. We must refer it to both acts, or rather to the solemnity at Sinai, together with all solemn renewals of it in after times; while at the same time the reference to the renewal under Josiah, this being still fresh in memory, may have been the foremost. We must not confine the reference of אֶשְׂבֵּעַ to spiritual adultery (= a fall away from Jahveh into idolatry); the context, especially the next clause, and yet more unmistakably ver. 8, refers to carnal uncleanness. This too was a breach

of the covenant, since in taking it the people bound itself not only to be faithful to God, but to keep and follow all the laws of His covenant. That the words, crowd into the house of the harlot, *i.e.* go thither in crowds, are to be taken of carnal uncleanness, may be gathered from ver. 8*b*: each neighs after the wife of his neighbour. Fornication is denounced as a desecration of the name of the Lord in Amos ii. 7. The first clause of ver. 8 suggests a comparison: well-fed horses are they, *i.e.* they resemble such. On the lechery of horses, see on Ezek. xxiii. 20. The *Cheth*. מוֹנִים is partic. Hoph. of מָן, in Aram. feed, fatten, here most suitable. The *Keri* מִיָּנִים would be the partic. Pu. from יָן, the meaning of which is doubtful, given arbitrarily by Kimchi and others as *armati sc. membro genitali*. מִיָּנִים, too, is derived from מָנַח, and given by Jerome *sensu obscæno: trahentes sc. genitalia*; but מִיָּנִים cannot come from מָנַח, מִיָּנִים being the only possible form in that case. Nor does *trahentes*, "draught-horses" (Hitz.), give a sense at all in point for the comparison. A better view is that of those who follow Simonis, in holding it to be partic. Hiph. of נָסַח, in Aethiop. *oberravit, vagatus est*. The participle is not to be joined with "horses" as a second qualifying word, but to be taken with הָיִי, the periphrastic form being chosen to indicate the enduring chronic character of the roaming.—Ver. 9. Such abandoned behaviour the Lord must punish.

Vers. 10-18. *In spite of the feeling of security fostered by the false prophets, the Lord will make good His word, and cause the land and kingdom to be laid waste by a barbarous people.*—

Ver. 10. "Go ye up upon her walls, and destroy, but make not a full end: tear away her tendrils; for they are not Jahveh's. Ver. 11. For faithless to me is the house of Israel become and the house of Judah, saith Jahveh. Ver. 12. They deny Jahveh, and say, He is not; and evil shall not come upon us, and sword and famine we shall not see. Ver. 13. And the prophets shall become wind, and he that speaketh is not in them: so may it happen unto them. Vers. 14. Therefore thus saith Jahveh the God of hosts: Because ye speak this word, behold, I make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them. Ver. 15. Behold, I bring upon you a nation from far, house of Israel, saith Jahveh, a people that is strong,

a people that is from of old, a people whose speech thou knowest not, and understandest not what it saith. Ver. 16. Its quiver is as an open grave, they are all mighty men. Ver. 17. It shall eat up thy harvest and thy bread; they shall eat up thy sons and thy daughters; it shall eat up thy flocks and thy cattle, eat up thy vine and thy fig-tree; it shall break down thy fenced cities, wherein thou trustest, with the sword. Ver. 18. But yet in those days, saith Jahveh, I will not make a full end with you."

To give emphasis to the threat, that the Lord will avenge Himself on such a people, we have immediately following, in ver. 10, the summons given to the enemy to subdue the land. *עָלֵי בְּשָׂרוֹתֶיהָ* is variously explained. The old translators took *שָׂרוֹת* to mean walls; but the second clause, tear away the tendrils, seems not to suit this well. And then this word occurs but once again, and with the meaning "caravan," while walls are *שָׂרוֹת* in Job xxiv. 11. But this reason is not strong enough to throw any doubt on the rendering: walls, supported as it is by the old versions. The form *שָׂרוֹת* from *שָׂר* is contracted from a form *שָׂרוֹרִים*, constructed analogously to *שָׂרוֹת*. The second clause would be unsuitable to the first only in the case that walls were to mean exclusively town walls or fortifications. But this is not the case. Even if the suffix here referred to Jerusalem, mentioned in ver. 1, which is very doubtful, still then the city would be looked on not in the light of a stronghold, but only as representative of the kingdom or of the theocracy. Probably, however, the suffix refers to the daughter of Zion as seat of the kingdom of God, and the idea of a vineyard was in the prophet's mind (cf ii. 21), under which figure Isaiah (v. 1-7) set forth the kingdom of God founded on Mount Zion; so that under walls, the walls of the vineyard are to be thought of. Elsewhere, indeed, these are called *גְּרִיזֹת* (also in xlix. 3), but only where the figure of a vineyard is further developed, or at least is brought more plainly and prominently forward. Here, again, where the enemy is summoned to go upon the walls, this figure is mixed up with that of a city; and so the word *שָׂרוֹת*, as indicating walls of any kind, seems most fitting. Graf has overthrown, as being unfounded, Hitz.'s assertion, that *עָלֵהָ* signified only, to go up against a thing; and that

accuracy and elegance required that the destruction should be of the walls, not of the vineyard itself. עָלָה *c. ב.* means also: to go up upon a thing, *e.g.* Ps. xxiv. 3, Deut. v. 5; and the verb שָׁחַת stands quite absolutely, so that it cannot be restricted to the walls. "And destruction can only take place when, by scaling the walls, entrance has been obtained into that which is to be destroyed, be it city or vineyard." We therefore adhere to the sig. walls, especially since the other translations attempted by Ew. and Hitz. are wholly without foundation. Hitz. will have us read שְׂרוּתֶיהָ, and take this as plural of שְׂרוּתָהּ; next he supposes a row of vines to be intended, but he obtains this sense only by arbitrarily appending the idea of vines. Ew. endeavours, from the Aram. and Arab., to vindicate for the word the meaning: clusters of blossom, and so to obtain for the whole the translation: push in amidst the blossom-spikes. A singular figure truly, which in no way harmonizes with עָלָה. "Destroy" is restricted by the following "but make not," etc.; see on iv. 27. On "tear away her tendrils," cf. Isa. xviii. 5. The spoilers are not to root up the vine itself, but to remove the tendrils, which do not belong to Jahveh. Spurious members of the nation are meant, those who have degenerated out of their kind.

The reasons of this command are given in ver. 11 ff., by a renewed exposure of the people's apostasy. The house of Israel and the house of Judah are become faithless. On this cf. iii. 6 ff. The mention of Israel along with Judah gives point to the threatening, since judgment has already been executed upon Israel. Judah has equalled Israel in faithlessness, and so a like fate will be its lot. Judah shows its faithlessness by denying the Lord, by saying לֹא הוּא. This Ew. translates: not so, after the οὐκ ἔστι ταῦτα of the LXX.; but he is certainly wrong in this. Even though הוּא may be used in place of the neuter, yet it cannot be so used in this connection, after the preceding כִּי־שֵׁנִי בַיהוָה. Better to take it: He is not, as the fools speak in Ps. xiv. 1: there is no God, *i.e.* go on in their lives as if God were not. "Jahveh is not" is therefore in other words: there exists not a God such as Jahveh is preached to us, who is to visit His people with sore punishments. This view is not open to the objection, *quod pro lubitu supplent*, which

Ros. raises against the interpretation : *non est is, qualem prophetæ describunt*. For we take יהוה not as *is qualem*, but as *est sc. Jahveh*; and we explain the meaning of Jahveh only in that reference in which He is disowned by these men, namely, as God who visits His people with punishments. In this character He was preached by the prophets. This appears from what is further said by these disowners of God : evil or mischief will not come on us. To a saying of this kind they could have been provoked only by threatenings of punishments. The prophets were not indeed the first to announce judgments; Moses in the law threatened transgressors with the sorest punishments. But the context, the threatening against the false prophets in ver. 13, suggests that here we are to think of announcements by the prophets. Doubtless the false prophets assured the people: evil shall not come upon you, in opposition to the true prophets, who threatened the sinful race with the judgments of God. Such prophets are to become wind, *sc.* with their utterances. הַרְפֵּךְ is not a noun: the word, but a verb, with the article instead of the relative pronoun, as in Josh. x. 24, 1 Chron. xxvi. 28, and often: He who speaks is not in them, *i.e.* in them there is none other speaker than themselves; the Spirit of God is not in them. הֵן, "there is none," is stronger than אֵין, meaning: they speak out of their own hearts. The threat, *so* be it unto them, may be most simply referred to the first clause: they become wind. Let the emptiness of their prophecies fall on their own heads, so that they themselves may come to nought.—Ver. 14. But the people is to have proof of the truth of the word of the Lord. Because it, despising the threatening of punishment, says: Misfortune shall not light upon us, the Lord will make the word in the mouth of Jeremiah a fire, and the people wood, that the fire may consume it. On this figure, cf. Isa. i. 31, x. 17. Ver. 15 ff. explain this, and announce the inroad of a dreadful enemy that is to lay waste the land and consume the people. "A people from far," as in iv. 16. Judah is called "house of Israel," not so much because it is what remains of Israel, but because, after the captivity of the ten tribes, Judah regarded itself as the only true Israel or people of God. Further description of the hostile people is intended to show its formidable power, and to inspire dread. הֵן, en-

during, firm, strong; cf. Gen. xlix. 24, Mic. vi. 2. מְעוֹלָם, dating from eternity, *i.e.* very ancient, not of recent origin, but become mighty in immemorial antiquity. A people speaking a language unfamiliar to the Jews, to comprehend whom is impossible, *i.e.* barbarous; cf. Deut. xxviii. 49. Further (ver. 16), it is a race of very heroes, fully furnished with deadly weapons. J. D. Mich. took objection to the figure, "its quiver is as an open grave;" but his conjecture שִׁפְתוֹ put nothing better in place of it. The link of comparison is this: as an open grave is filled with dead men, so the quiver of this enemy is filled with deadly missiles.—Ver. 17. This people will devour the harvest and the bread, the children, the cattle, and the best fruits of the land. Devour, here as often, in the wider sense, destroy; cf. *e.g.* iii. 24 and x. 25, where the first half of the present verse is compressed into the words: they ate up Jacob. We need not wait to refute Hitz.'s absurd remark, that the author imagined the enemy, the assumed Scythians, to be cannibals. In the second half of the verse the words, "the fenced cities wherein thou trustest," are a reminiscence of Deut. xxviii. 52; and hence we may see, that while our prophet is describing the enemy in vers. 15-18, Moses' threatening, Deut. xxviii. 49-52, was in his mind. שִׁשֵּׁשׁ, break in pieces, as in Mal. i. 4. With the sword, *i.e.* by force of arms; the sword, as principal weapon, being named, instead of the entire apparatus of war. In ver. 18 the restriction of ver. 10 (cf. iv. 27) is repeated, and with it the threatening of judgment is rounded off.

Vers. 19-31. *This calamity Judah is preparing for itself by its obduracy and excess of wickedness.*—Ver. 19. "And if ye then shall say, Wherefore hath Jahveh our God done all this unto us? then say to them, Like as ye have forsaken me and served strange gods in your land, so shall ye serve strangers in a land that is not yours. Ver. 20. Declare this in the house of Jacob, and publish it in Judah, saying, Ver. 21. Hear now this, foolish people without understanding, that have eyes and see not, have ears and hear not. Ver. 22. Me will ye not fear, saith Jahveh, nor tremble before me? who have set the sand for a bound to the sea, an everlasting boundary that it passes not, and its waves toss themselves and cannot, and roar and pass not over. Ver. 23. But this people hath a stubborn and

rebellious heart; they turned away and went. Ver. 24. And said not in their heart: Let us now fear Jahveh our God, who giveth rain, the early rain and the late rain, in its season; who keepeth for us the appointed weeks of the harvest. Ver. 25. Your iniquities have turned away these, and your sins have withholden the good from you. Ver. 26. For among my people are found wicked men; they lie in wait as fowlers stoop; they set a trap, they catch men. Ver. 27. As a cage full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit; therefore are they become great and rich. Ver. 28. They are grown fat and sleek, they go beyond bound in wickedness; the cause they try not, the cause of the orphans, that they might have prosperity; and the right of the needy they judge not. Ver. 29. Shall I not punish this? saith Jahveh; shall not my soul be avenged on such a people as this? Ver. 30. The appalling and horrible is done in the land. Ver. 31. The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule under their lead, and my people loves it so. But what will ye do in the end thereof?"

The thought of ver. 19, that the people, by its apostasy, draws down this judgment on itself, forms the transition from the threat of punishment to the reproof of sins. The penalty corresponds to the sin. Because Judah in its own land serves the gods of foreigners, so it must serve strangers in a foreign land.—Ver. 20 f. The reproof of sins is introduced by an apostrophe to the hardened race. The exhortation, "Publish this," is addressed to all the prophet's hearers who have the welfare of the people at heart. "This," in vers. 20 and 21, refers to the chiding statement from ver. 23 onwards, that the people fears not God. The form of address, people foolish and without understanding (cf. iv. 22, Hos. vii. 11), is made cutting, in order, if possible, to bring the people yet to their senses. The following clauses, "they have eyes," etc., depict spiritual blindness and deafness, as in Ezek. xii. 22; cf. Dent. xxix. 3. Blindness is shown in that they see not the government of God's almighty power in nature; deafness, in that they hear not the voice of God in His word. They have no fear even of the God whose power has in the sand set an impassable barrier for the mighty waves of the sea. "Me" is put first for emphasis. The waves beat against their appointed barrier, but are

not able, *sc.* to pass it.—Ver. 23. But this people has a stubborn and rebellious heart; it bows not beneath the almighty hand of God. “Stubborn and rebellious,” joined as in Deut. xxi. 18, 20. Hence the following קָרַר is not to be taken from קָרַר : they defy (Hitz.), but from סָרַר : they turn away and go off, and consider not that they owe their daily bread to the Lord. Neither does God’s power move the obdurate people to the fear of Him, nor do the proofs of His love make any impression. They do not consider that God gives them the rain which lends the land its fruitfulness, so that at the fixed time they may gather in the harvest. The ו *cop.* before יוֹרֶה is rejected by the Masoretes in the *Keri* as out of place, since מִשָּׁם is not any special rain, co-ordinate to the early and late rain (Hitz.), or because they had Deut. xi. 14, Joel ii. 23 before them. But in this they failed to notice that the ו before יוֹרֶה and that before מִלְקוֹשׁ are correlative, having the force of *et—et*. שְׁבָעַת is *stat. constr.* from שְׁבָעַת, weeks, and to it חֲקוֹת is co-ordinated in place of an adjective, so that קָצִיר is dependent on two co-ordinate *stat. constr.*, as in xlvi. 9, 11, Zeph. ii. 6. But the sense is not, the weeks, the statutes, of the harvest, *i.e.* the fixed and regulated phenomena which regulate the harvest (Graf), but, appointed weeks of harvest. The seven weeks between the second day of the passover and the feast of harvest, or of weeks, Ex. xxiii. 16, xxxiv. 22, Deut. xvi. 9 f., are what is here meant. We must reject the rendering, “oath as to the harvest-time” (L. de Dieu, J. D. Mich., and Ew.), since Scripture knows nothing of oaths taken by God as to the time of harvest; in Gen. viii. 22 there is no word of an oath.—Ver. 25. The people has by its sins brought about the withdrawal of these blessings (the withholding of rain, etc.). הָטוּ, turned away, as in Amos v. 12, Mal. iii. 5. “These,” *i.e.* the blessings mentioned in ver. 24. The second clause repeats the same thing. The good, *i.e.* which God in His goodness bestowed on them.

This is established in ver. 26 f. by bringing home to the people their besetting sins. In (amidst) the people are found notorious sinners. יֹשְׁבֵי in indefinite generality: they spy about, lie in wait; cf. Hos. xiii. 7. The singular is chosen because the act described is not undertaken in company, but by individuals. שָׁךְ from שָׁכַךְ, bend down, stoop, as bird-catchers hide

behind the extended nets till the birds have gone in, so as then to draw them tight. "They set;" not the fowlers, but the wicked ones. מִשְׁחִית, destroyer (Ex. xii. 23, and often), or destruction (Ezek. xxi. 36); here, by virtue of the context, a trap which brings destruction. The men they catch are the poor, the needy, and the just; cf. ver. 28 and Isa. xxix. 21. The figure of bird-catching leads to a cognate one, by which are set forth the gains of the wicked or the produce of their labours. As a cage is filled with captured birds, so the houses of the wicked are filled with deceit, *i.e.* possessions obtained by deceit, through which they attain to credit, power, and wealth. Graf has overthrown Hitz.'s note, that we must understand by מְרֻמָּה, not riches obtained by deceit, but the means and instruments of deceit; and this on account of the following: therefore they enrich themselves. But, as Graf shows, it is not the possession of these appliances, but of the goods acquired by deceit, that has made these people great and rich, "as the birds that fill the cage are not a means for capture, but property got by cunning." כְּלִיב, cage, is not strictly a bird-cage, but a bird-trap woven of willows (Amos viii. 1), with a lid to shut down, by means of which birds were caught.—Ver. 28. Through the luxurious living their wealth makes possible to them, they are grown fat and sleek. עֲשֵׂתִי, in graphic description, is joined asynd. to the preceding verb. It is explained by recent comm. of fat bodies, become glossy, in keeping with the noun עֲשֵׂת, which in Cant. v. 14 expresses the glitter of ivory; for the meaning *cogitare*, think, meditate, which עֲשֵׂת bears in Chald., yields no sense available here. The next clause is variously explained. נָם points to another, yet worse kind of behaviour. It is not possible to defend the translation: they overflow with evil speeches, or swell out with evil things (Umbr., Ew.), since עָבַר *c. accus.* does not mean to overflow *with* a thing. Yet more arbitrary is the assumption of a change of the subject: (their) evil speeches overflow. The only possible subject to the verb is the wicked ones, with whom the context deals before and after. דְּבָרֵי־רָע are not words of wickedness = what may be called wickedness, but things of wickedness, wicked things. דְּבָרֵי serves to distribute the idea of רָע into the particular cases into which it falls, as in Ps. lxxv. 4, cv. 27, and elsewhere, where it is commonly

held to be pleonastic. Hitz. expounds truly: the individual wickednesses in which the abstract idea of wicked manifests itself. Sense: they go beyond all that can be conceived as evil, *i.e.* the bounds of evil or wickedness. The cause they plead not, namely, the cause of the orphans. וְיִצְלִיחֵם, *imperf. c. 1 consec.*: that so they might have prosperity. Hitz. regards the wicked men as the subject, and explains the words thus: such justice would indeed be a necessary condition of their success. But that the wicked could attain to prosperity by seizing every opportunity of defending the rights of the fatherless is too weak a thought, coming after what has preceded, and besides it does not fit the case of those who go beyond all bounds in wickedness. Ew. and Graf translate: that they (the wicked) might make good the rightful cause (of the orphan), help the poor man to his rights. But even if וְיִצְלִיחֵם seems in 2 Chron. vii. 11, Dan. viii. 25, to have the signif. carry through, make good, yet in these passages the sig. carry through with success is fundamental; where, as here, this will not suit, וְיִצְלִיחֵם being in any case applicable only to doubtful and difficult causes—a thought foreign to the present context. Blame is attached to the wicked, not because they do not defend the orphan's doubtful pleas, but because they give no heed at all to the orphan's rights. We therefore hold with Raschi that the orphans are subject to this verb: that the orphans might have had prosperity. The plural is explained when we note that יְהוֹם is perfectly general, and may be taken as collective. The accusation in this verse shows further that the prophet had the godless rulers and judges of the people in his eye.—Ver. 29 is a refrain-like repetition of ver. 9.—The vers. 30 and 31 are, as Hitz. rightly says, “a sort of *epimetrum* added after the conclusion in ver. 29,” in which the already described moral depravity is briefly characterized, and is asserted of all ranks of the people. Appalling and horrible things happen in the land; cf. ii. 12, xxiii. 14, xviii. 13, Hos. vi. 10. The prophets prophesy with falsehood, בְּשָׁקֶר, as in xx. 6, xxix. 9; more fully בְּשָׁמַיִ לְשָׁקֶר, xxiii. 25, xxvii. 15. The priests rule עַל יְדֵיהֶם, at their (the prophets') hands, *i.e.* under their guidance or direction; cf. 1 Chron. xxv. 2 ff., 2 Chron. xxiii. 18; not: go by their side (Ges., Dietr.), for יָרַם is not: go, march on, but: trample down.

My people loves it so, yields willingly to such a lead ; cf. Amos iv. 5. What will ye do לֹא-תַעֲשֶׂה, as to the end of this conduct ? The *suff. form.* with neuter force. The end thereof will be the judgment ; will ye be able to turn it away ?

Chap. vi. THE JUDGMENT IS IRREVOCABLY DECREED.—A hostile army approaches from the north, and lays siege to Jerusalem, in order to storm the city (vers. 1–8). None is spared, since the people rejects all counsels to reform (vers. 9–15). Since it will not repent, it will fall by the hands of the enemy, in spite of the outward sacrificial service (vers. 16–21). The enemy will smite Zion without mercy, seeing that the trial of the people has brought about no change for the better in them (vers. 22–30).

Vers. 1–8. *The judgment breaking over Jerusalem.*—Ver. 1. “Flee, ye sons of Benjamin, out of the midst of Jerusalem, and in Tekoa blow the trumpet, and over Beth-haccerem set up a sign ; for evil approacheth from the north, and great destruction. Ver. 2. The comely and the delicate—I lay waste the daughter of Zion. Ver. 3. To her come shepherds with their flocks, pitch their tents about her round about, and devonr each his portion. Ver. 4. Sanctify war against her ; arise, let us go up at noon. Woe unto us ! for the day declineth ; for the shadows of evening lengthen. Ver. 5. Arise, let us go up by night, and destroy her palaces. Ver. 6. For thus hath Jahveh of hosts spoken, Hew down wood, and pile up against Jerusalem a rampart ; she is the city that is (to be) punished, she is all full of oppression in her midst. Ver. 7. As a fountain pours forth its water, so pours she forth her wickedness : violence and spoiling is heard in her ; before my face continually, wounds and smiting. Ver. 8. Be warned, Jerusalem, lest my soul tear herself from thee, lest I make thee a waste, a land uninhabited.”

In graphic delineation of the enemy’s approach against Jerusalem, the prophet calls on the people to flee. As regarded its situation, Jerusalem belonged to the tribe of Benjamin ; the boundary between the tribal domain of Judah and Benjamin passed through the valley of Ben-Hinnom on the south side of Jerusalem, and then ran northwards to the west of the city (Josh. xv. 8, xviii. 16 f.). The city was inhabited by Judeans

and Benjamites, 1 Chron. ix. 2 ff. The summons is addressed to the Benjamites as the prophet's fellow-countrymen. Tekoa lay about two hours' journey southwards from Bethlehem, according to Jerome, on a hill twelve Roman miles south of Jerusalem; see on Josh. xv. 59. This town is mentioned because its name admits of a play on the word תְּקוּאָה. The alarm is given in the country south of Jerusalem, because the enemy is coming from the north, so that the flight will be directed southwards. Beth-haccerem, acc. to Jerome, was a hamlet (*vicus*) between Jerusalem and Tekoa, *qui lingua Syra et Hebraica Bethacharma nominatur, et ipse in monte positus*, apparently on what is now called the Frank's Hill, *Jebel Fureidis*; see on Neh. iii. 14. תְּקוּמָה, the lifting up, that which raises itself up, or is raised; here a lofty beacon or signal, the nature of which is not further made known. The meaning, fire-signal, or ascending column of smoke, cannot be made good from Judg. xx. 38, 40, since there עָשָׂן is appended; nor from the statements of classical authors (in Ros.), that in time of war bodies of troops stationed in different places made their positions known to one another by masses of rising flame during the night, and by columns of smoke in the day time. As to the last clause, cf. i. 14. "Great destruction," as in iv. 6.—In ver. 2 the impending judgment is further described. It falls on the daughter of Zion, the capital and its inhabitants, personified as a beautiful and delicately reared woman. יְפִיָּה, defectively written for יְפִיָּהּ, contracted from יְפִיָּהּ, lovely, beautiful. The words are not vocatives, O fair and delicate, but accusatives made to precede their governing verb absolutely, and are explained by "the daughter of Zion," dependent on "I destroy:" the fair and the delicate, namely, the daughter of Zion, I destroy. כִּמְצָאָהּ as in Hos. iv. 5. The other meaning of this verb, to be like, to resemble, is wholly unsuitable here; and, besides, in this signification it is construed with כִּי or כֵּן. Ew.'s translation, I mean the daughter of Zion, is not justifiable by the usage of the word, the Piel only, and not the Kal, being capable of this interpretation.—Ver. 3. The destruction comes about by means of shepherds with their flocks, who set up their tents round the city, and depasture each his portion. We need hardly observe that the shepherds and their flocks are a figure

for princes, who with their peoples besiege and sack Jerusalem with this cf. i. 15. The figure does not point to a nomad swarm, or the Scythian people, as Ew. supposes. "Each his hand," *i.e.* what lies to his hand, or next him.—Ver. 4. The description passes from figure to reality, and the enemies appear before us as speaking, inciting one another to the combat, encouraging one another to storm the city. To sanctify a war, *i.e.* prepare themselves for the war by religious consecration, inasmuch as the war was undertaken under commission from God, and because the departure of the army, like the combat itself, was consecrated by sacrifice and other religious ceremonies; see on Joel iv. 9. לָעָלֶיךָ, to go up against a place as an enemy, not, go up upon, in which case the object, them (the city or walls), could not be omitted. It is plainly the storming or capture of the town that is meant by the going up; hence we may understand what follows: and we will destroy her palaces. We have a rousing call to go up at noon or in clear daylight, joined with "woe to us," a cry of disappointment that they will not be able to gain their ends so soon, not indeed till night; in these we see the great eagerness with which they carry on the assault. וְיוֹם הַחֵמָּה, the day turns itself, declines towards its end; cf. Ps. xc. 9. The enemies act under a commission from God, who has imposed on them the labour of the siege, in order to punish Jerusalem for her sins. Jahveh is here most fittingly called the God of hosts; for as God of the world, obeyed by the armies of heaven, He commands the kings of the earth to chastise His people. Hew wood, *i.e.* fell trees for making the siege works, cf. Deut. xx. 20, both for raising the attacking ramparts,¹ and for the entire apparatus necessary for storming the town. וְעֵץ is not a collective form from עֵץ, like וְעֵצִים from עֵץ; but the וְ is a suffix in spite of the omission of the Mappik, which is given by but a few of the *codd.*, eastern and western, for we know that Mappik is sometimes omitted, *e.g.* Num. xv. 28, 31; cf. Ew. § 247, *d.* We are encouraged to take it so by Deut. xx. 19, where וְעֵץ are the trees in the vicinity of the town, of which only the fruit trees were to be spared in case of siege, while those which did not bear eatable fruit were to be

¹ *Agger ex terra lignisque attollitur contra murum, de quo tela jactantur. Veget. de re milit. iv. 15.*

made use of for the purposes of the siege. And thus we must here, too, read עֲצָה, and refer the suffix to the next noun (Jerusalem). On "pile up a rampart," cf. 2 Sam. xx. 15, Ezek. iv. 2, etc. הַפָּקֵר is used as passive of Kal, and impersonally. The connection with הָעִיר is to be taken like הָיְהָה הָיִד in Isa. xxix. 1: the city where it is punished, or perhaps like Ps. lix. 6, the relative being supplied: that is punished. הַפָּקֵר is not to be joined, contrary to the accents, with הַפָּקֵר (Ven., J. D. Mich.), a connection which, even if it were legitimate, would give but a feeble thought. It belongs to what follows, "she is wholly oppression in her midst," i.e. on all sides in her there is oppression. This is expanded in ver. 7. LXX. and Jerome have taken הָקִיר from קִיר, and translate: like as a cistern keeps its water cool (*ψύχει, frigidam facit*), so she keeps her wickedness cool. Hitz. has pronounced in favour of this interpretation, but changes "keep cool" into "keep fresh," and understands the metaphor thus: they take good care that their wickedness does not stagnate or become impaired by disuse. But it would be a strange metaphor to put "keep wickedness cool," for "maintain it in strength and vigour." We therefore, along with Luth. and most commentators, prefer the rabbinical interpretation: as a well makes its water to gush out, etc.; for there is no sufficient force in the objection that מְקוֹר from קוֹר, dig, is not a spring but a well, that הָקִיר has still less the force of making to gush forth, and that בּוֹר wholly excludes the idea of causing to spring out. The first assertion is refuted by ii. 13, מְקוֹר, fountain of living water; whence it is clear that the word does mean a well fed by a spring. It is true, indeed, that the word בּוֹר, a later way of writing בְּאֵר (cf. 1 Chron. xi. 17 f. 22 with 2 Sam. xxiii. 15 f. 20), means usually, a pit, a cistern dug out; but this form is not substantially different from בְּאֵר, well, *puteus*, which is used for בּוֹר in Ps. lv. 24 and lxix. 16. Accordingly, this latter form can undoubtedly stand with the force of בְּאֵר, as has been admitted by the Masoretes when they substituted for it

בֵּיר = בְּאֵר; cf. the Arab. بئر. The noun מְקוֹר puts beyond doubt the legitimacy of giving to הָקִיר, from קוֹר, to dig a well, the signification of making water to gush forth. The form הַקָּרִי is indeed referable to קִיר, but only shows, as is otherwise

well known, that no very strict line of demarcation can be drawn between the forms of verbs 'עַע and 'עו; קָרַר, again, is formed regularly from קָרַר. Violence and spoiling; cf. xx. 8, and Amos iii. 10, Hab. i. 3. "Before my face," before mine eyes, corresponds to "is heard," as wounds and smittings are the consequences of violence. On that head, cf. Ps. lv. 10–12. —Ver. 8. If Jerusalem cease not from these sins and crimes, the Lord must devote it to spoliation. Let thyself be corrected, warned; cf. Ps. ii. 10, Lev. xxvi. 23. תִּקַּע from יָקַע, tear oneself loose, estrange oneself, as in Ezek. xxiii. 17 ff. "A land uninhabited" is an apposition giving greater expressiveness to "a waste," xxii. 6.

Vers. 9–15. *This judgment will fall unsparingly on Jerusalem, because they listen to no warning, but suffer themselves to be confirmed in their shameless courses by false prophets and wicked priests.*—Ver. 9. "Thus hath Jahveh of hosts said: They shall have a gleaning of the remnant of Israel as of a vine: lay thine hand again as a vine-dresser on the shoots. Ver. 10. To whom shall I speak, and testify, that they may hear? Behold, uncircumcised is their ear, and they cannot give heed: behold, the word of Jahveh is become to them a reproach; they have no pleasure in it. Ver. 11. But of the fury of Jahveh am I full, am weary with holding it in. Pour it out upon the child on the street, and upon the group of young men together; for even the husband with the wife shall be taken, the old man with him that is full of days. Ver. 12. And their houses shall pass unto others, fields and wives together; for I stretch out mine hand against the inhabitants of the land, saith Jahveh. Ver. 13. For great and small are all of them greedy for gain; and from the prophet to the priest, all use deceit. Ver. 14. And they heal the breach of the daughter of my people lightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace. Ver. 15. They are put to shame because they have done abomination, yet they take not shame to themselves, neither know they disgrace; therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall stumble, hath Jahveh said."

The threatening of ver. 9 is closely connected with the foregoing. The Lord will make Jerusalem an uninhabited waste, because it will not take warning. The enemy will make

a gleanings like vine-dressers, *i.e.* they will yet search out even that which is left of the people, and crush it or carry it captive. This still sterner threat does come into contradiction with the repeated pledge, that Israel is not to be wholly extirpated, not to be made an utter end of (iv. 27, v. 10, 18). For even at the gleanings odd clusters are left, which are not noticed or set store by. The words convey the idea that the enemy will not have done with it after one devastating campaign, but will repeat his inroads. עֲלִיל is construed with the accus. of the vineyard in Lev. xix. 10. The "remnant of Israel" is not the kingdom of Judah at large, but Judah already reduced by judgments. In the second clause the idea of the first is repeated in the form of a command to the gleaners. The command is to be looked on as addressed to the enemy by God; and this turn of the expression serves to put the thought with a positiveness that excludes the faintest doubt. To bring back the hand means: yet again to turn it, stretch it out against a person or thing; cf. Amos i. 8, Isa. i. 25. סִלְסִלוֹת is not baskets, like סִלִּים, Gen. xl. 16, but like עֲלִילִים, Isa. xviii. 5, vine-shoots, prop. waving twigs, like תִּלְתָּלִים, Cant. v. 11, from לָלַץ = לָלַץ and לָלַץ, wave (Ew., Hitz.).—Ver. 10 f. Well might Jeremiah warn the people once more (cf. ver. 8), in order to turn sore judgment away from it; but it cannot and will not hear, for it is utterly hardened. Yet can he not be silent; for he is so filled with the fury of God, that he must pour it forth on the depraved race. This is our view of the progress of the thought in these verses; whereas Hitz. and Graf make what is said in ver. 11 refer to the utterance of the dreadful revelation received in ver. 9. But this is not in keeping with "testify that they may hear," nor with the unmistakable contrast between the pouring out of the divine fury, ver. 11, and the testifying that they may hear, ver. 10. Just because their ear is uncircumcised so that they cannot hear, is it in vain to speak to them for the purpose of warning them; and the prophet has no alternative left but to pour out on the deaf and seared people that fury of the Lord with which he is inwardly filled. The question: to whom should I speak? etc. (עַל for עָלַי, as xi. 2 and often), is not to be taken as a question to God, but only as a rhetorical turn of the thought, that all further speaking or warning is in vain.

"Testify," lay down testimony by exhibiting the sin and the punishment it brings with it. "That they may hear," *ut audiant*, the Chald. has well paraphrased: *ut accipiant doctrinam*. Uncircumcised is their ear, as it were covered with a foreskin, so that the voice of God's word cannot find its way in; cf. v. 24, iv. 4. The second clause, introduced by הִנֵּה, adduces the reason of their not being able to hear. The word of God is become a reproach to them; they are determined not to hearken to it, because it lashes their sins. Ver. 11 comes in adversatively: But the fury of the Lord drives him to speak. הַמַּת יְהוָה is not a holy ardour for Jahveh (Graf and many ancient comm.), but the wrath of God against the people, which the prophet cannot contain, *i.e.* keep to himself, but must pour out. Because they will not take correction, he must inflict the judgment upon them, not merely utter it. The imper. שִׁפֹּךְ is to be taken like הִשִּׁיב, ver. 9, not as an expression of the irresistible necessity which, in spite of all his efforts against it, compels the prophet to pour forth, in a certain sense, the wrath of the Lord on all classes of the people by the very publishing of God's word (Graf); but it is the command of God, to be executed by him, as is shown by "for I stretch out mine hand," ver. 12. The prophet is to pour out the wrath of God by the proclamation of God's word, which finds its fulfilment in judgments of wrath; see on i. 10. Upon all classes of the people: the children that play in the street (cf. ix. 20), the young men gathered together in a cheerful company, the men and women, old men and them that are full of days, *i.e.* those who have reached the furthest limit of old age. כִּי tells why the prophet is so to speak: for upon the whole population will God's wrath be poured out. יִלְכָּד, not, be taken captive, but, be taken, overtaken by the wrath, as in viii. 9; cf. 1 Sam. xiv. 41.—Ver. 12a gives the result of being thus taken: their houses, fields, and wives will be handed over to others, descend to others. Wives are mentioned along with houses and fields, as in the commandment, Ex. xx. 17; cf. Dent. v. 18. The loss of all one's possessions is mentioned in connection with reproof, following in ver. 13, of greed and base avarice. The threatening is confirmed in ver. 12b by the clause: for I (Jahveh) stretch my hand out, etc. Then in vers. 13 and 14 the cause of the judg-

ment is adduced. The judgment falls upon all, for all, great and little, *i.e.* mean and powerful (cf. vers. 4, 5), go after base gain; and the teachers, who ought to lead the people on the true way (Isa. xxx. 21), use deceit and dishonesty. They heal the breach of the daughter of my people, *i.e.* the infirmities and injuries of the state, after a light and frivolous fashion (נָקַח is *partic. Niph. fœm.*, and לֵב is of the thing that covers another);—in this, namely, that they speak of peace and healing where there is no peace; that they do not uncover the real injuries so as to heal them thoroughly, but treat them as if they were trifling and in no way dangerous infirmities.—Ver. 15. For this behaviour they are put to shame, *i.e.* deceived in their hope. The perf. is prophetic, representing the matter as being equally certain as if it had been already realized. It cannot bear to be translated either: they should be ashamed (Ros., Umbr. after the Chald.), or: they would be ashamed (Ew.). The following grounding clause adduces the cause of their being put to shame: because they have done abomination; and the next clauses bring in a contrast: yet on the contrary, shame and disgrace they know not; therefore on the day of visitation they will fall with the rest. When these verses are repeated in chap. viii. 12, the Niph. הִפְקִיזוּם is used in place of the Hiph. הִפְקִיזוּם . It does not, however, follow from this that the Hiph. has here the force of the Niph., but only thus much, that the Hiph. is here used, not in a transitive, but in a simply active meaning: to have shame or disgrace. For בְּקִרְבִּי with the relative omitted, time when I visit, we have in viii. 12 the simpler form of the noun בְּקִרְבִּי , as in x. 15, xli. 21, and often. Such divergencies do not justify the accommodation of the present passage to these others, since on occasions of repetitions the expression in matters of subordinate importance is often varied. The perf. of the verb has here the force of the *fut. exact*.

Vers. 16-21. *The judgment cannot be turned aside by mere sacrifice without a change of heart.*—Ver. 16. “Thus hath Jahveh said: Stand on the ways, and look, and ask after the everlasting paths, which (one) is the way of good, and walk therein; so shall ye find rest for your souls. But they say, We will not go. Ver. 17. And I have set over you watchmen, (saying): Harken to

the sound of the trumpet; but they say, We will not hearken. Ver. 18. Therefore hear, ye peoples, and know, thou congregation, what happens to them. Ver. 19. Hear, O earth! Behold, I bring evil on this people, the fruit of their thoughts; for to my words they have not hearkened, and at my law they have spurned. Ver. 20. To what end, then, is there incense coming to me from Sheba, and the good spice-cane from a far land? Your burnt-offerings are not a pleasure, and your slain-offerings are not grateful to me. Ver. 21. Therefore thus hath Jahveh said: Behold, I lay stumbling-blocks for this people, that thereon fathers and sons may stumble, at once the neighbour and his friend shall perish."

Ver. 16 f. The Lord has not left any lack of instruction and warning. He has marked out for them the way of salvation in the history of the ancient times. It is to this reference is made when they, in ignorance of the way to walk in, are called to ask after the everlasting paths. This thought is clothed thus: they are to step forth upon the ways, to place themselves where several ways diverge from one another, and inquire as to the everlasting paths, so as to discover which is the right way, and then on this they are to walk. נְתִיבוֹת עוֹלָם are paths that have been trod in the hoary time of old, but not all sorts of ways, good and bad, which they are to walk on indiscriminately, so that it may be discovered which of them is the right one (Hitz.). This meaning is not to be inferred from the fact, that in xviii. 15 everlasting paths are opposed to untrodden ways; indeed this very passage teaches that the everlasting ways are the right ones, from which through idolatry the people have wandered into unbeaten paths. Thus the paths of the old time are here the ways in which Israel's godly ancestors have trod; meaning substantially, the patriarchs' manner of thinking and acting. For the following question, "which is the way," etc., does not mean, amongst the paths of old time to seek out that which, as the right one, leads to salvation, but says simply thus much: ask after the paths of the old time, so as thus to recognise the right way, and then, when ye have found it, to walk therein. דֶּרֶךְ הַטוֹב, not, the good way; for הַטוֹב cannot be an objective appended to דֶּרֶךְ, since immediately after, the latter word is construed in פֶּה as *fæm*. "The good" is the genitive dependent on "way:" way

of the good, that leads to the good, to salvation. This way Israel might learn to know from the history of antiquity recorded in the Torah. Graf has brought the sense well out in this shape: "Look inquiringly backwards to ancient history (Deut. xxxii. 7), and see how success and enduring prosperity forsook your fathers when they left the way prescribed to them by God, to walk in the ways of the heathen (xviii. 15); learn that there is but one way, the way of the fear of Jahveh, on which blessing and salvation are to be found (xxxii. 39, 40)." Find (with ו consec.), and find thus=so shall ye find; cf. Ew. § 347, *b*; Ges. § 130, 2. To "we will not go," we may supply from the context: on the way of good.—Ver. 17. But God does not let the matter end here. He caused prophets to rise up amongst them, who called their attention to the threatening evil. Watchers are prophets, Ezek. iii. 17, who stand upon the watch-tower to keep a lookout, Hab. ii. 1, and to give the people warning, by proclaiming what they have seen in spirit. "Hearken to the sound," etc., are not the words of the watchmen (prophets), for it is they who blow the trumpet, but the words of God; so that we have to supply, "and I said." The comparison of the prophets to watchmen, who give the alarm of the imminent danger by means of the sound of the trumpet, involves the comparison of the prophets' utterances to the clang of the signal-horn,—suggested besides by Amos iii. 6.—Ver. 18. Judah being thus hardened, the Lord makes known to the nations what He has determined regarding it; cf. Mic. i. 2. The sense of "Know, thou congregation," etc., is far from clear, and has been very variously given. Ros., Dahl., Maur., Umbr., and others, understand עֲרֵה of the congregation or assembly of the foreign nations; but the word cannot have this meaning without some further qualifying word. Besides, a second mention of the nations is not suitable to the context. The congregation must be that of Israel. The only question can be, whether we are by this to think of the whole people (of Judah), (Chald., Syr., Ew., and others), or whether it is the company of the ungodly that is addressed, as in the phrase עֲרֵה קִיָּה (Hitz.). But there is little probability in the view, that the crew of the ungodly is addressed along with the nations and the earth. Not less open to debate is the construc-

tion of אֶת־אֲשֶׁר־בָּם. In any case little weight can be attached to Hitz.'s assumption, that אֶת is used only to mark out the אֲשֶׁר as relative pronoun: observe it, O company that is amidst them. The passages, xxxviii. 16 (*Chet.*), and Eccles. iv. 3, where אֶת seems to have this force, are different in kind; for a definite noun precedes, and to it the relation אֶת־אֲשֶׁר is subjoined. And then what, on this construction, is the reference of בָּם, *amidst them*? Hitz. has said nothing on this point. But it could only be referred to "peoples:" the company which is amidst the peoples; and this gives no reasonable sense. These three words can only be object to "know:" know what is amongst (in) them; or: what is or happens to them (against them). It has been taken in the first sense by Chald. (their sins), Umbr., Manr.: what happens in or amongst them; in the second by Ros., Dahl.: what I shall do against them. Ewald, again, without more ado, changes בָּם into בָּא: know, thou congregation, what is coming. By this certainly a suitable sense is secured; but there are no sufficient reasons for a change of the text, it is the mere expedient of embarrassment. All the ancient translators have read the present text; even the translation of the LXX.: καὶ οἱ ποιμαίνοντες τὰ ποίμνια αὐτῶν, has been arrived at by a confounding of letters (רעי ערה with רעי ער). We understand "congregation" of Israel, *i.e.* not of the whole people of Judah, but of those to whom the title "congregation" was applicable, *i.e.* of the godly, small as their number might be. Accordingly, we are not to refer אֶת־אֲשֶׁר־בָּם to "peoples:" what is occurring amidst the peoples, *viz.* that they are coming to besiege Jerusalem, etc. (ver. 3 ff.). Nor is it to be referred to those in Judah who, according to vers. 16 and 17, do not walk in the right way, and will not give ear to the sound of the trumpet. The latter reference, acc. to which the disputed phrase would be translated: what will happen to them (against them), seems more feasible, and corresponds better to the parallelism of vers. 18 and 19, since this same phrase is then explained in ver. 19 by: I bring evil upon this people.¹

¹ So that we cannot hold, with Graf, that the reading of the text is "manifestly corrupted;" still less do we hold as substantiated or probable his conjectural reading: וְדָעוּ אֲשֶׁר הָעֵרְתִּי בָם, and know what I have testified against them.

In ver. 19 the evil is characterized as a punishment drawn down by them on themselves by means of the apposition: fruit of their thoughts. "Fruit of their thoughts," not of their deeds (Isa. iii. 10), in order to mark the hostility of the evil heart towards God. God's law is put in a place of prominence by the turn of the expression: My law, and they spurned at it; cf. Ew. § 344, *b*, with 309, *b*.—Ver. 20. The people had no shortcoming in the matter of sacrifice in the temple; but in this service, as being mere outward service of works, the Lord has no pleasure, if the heart is estranged from Him, rebels against His commandments. Here we have the doctrine, to obey is better than sacrifice, 1 Sam. xv. 22. The Lord desires that men do justice, exercise love, and walk humbly with Him, Mic. vi. 8. Sacrifice, as *opus operatum*, is denounced by all the prophets: cf. Hos. vi. 6, Amos v. 21 ff., Isa. i. 11, Ps. l. 8 ff. Incense from Sheba (see on Ezek. xxvii. 22) was required partly for the preparation of the holy incense (Ex. xxx. 34), partly as an addition to the meat-offerings, Lev. ii. 1, 15, etc. Good, precious cane, is the aromatic reed, *calamus odoratus* (Ex. xxx. 23), *calamus* from a far country,—namely, brought from India,—and used in the preparation of the anointing oil; see on Ex. xxx. 23. לָרִיחַ is from the language of the Torah; cf. Lev. i. 3 ff., xxii. 19 ff., Ex. xxviii. 38; and with לֹא: not to well-pleasing, *sc.* before Jahveh, *i.e.* they cannot procure for the offerers the pleasure or favour of God. With לֹא עָרְבוּ לִי cf. Hos. ix. 4.—Ver. 21. Therefore the Lord will lay stumbling-blocks before the people, whereby they all come to grief. The stumbling-blocks by which the people are to fall and perish, are the inroads of the enemies, whose formidableness is depicted in ver. 22 ff. The idea of totality is realized by individual cases in "fathers and sons, neighbour and his friend." יָחִיד belongs to the following clause, and not the *Keri*, but the *Cheth*. יֵאָבֵד, is the true reading. The *Keri* is formed after the analogy of xlv. 6 and l. 32; but it is unsuitable, since then we would require, as in the passages cited, to have נָפַל in direct connection with בָּשָׁל.

Vers. 22-30. *A distant, cruel people will execute the judgment, since Judah, under the trial, has proved to be worthless metal.—*

Ver. 22. "Thus hath Jahveh said: Behold, a people cometh

from the land of the north, and a great nation raises itself from the furthestmost sides of the earth. Ver. 23. Bows and javelins they bear; cruel it is, and they have no mercy; their voice roareth like the sea; and on horses they ride, equipped as a man for the war against thee, daughter of Zion. Ver. 24. We heard the rumour thereof: weak are our hands: anguish hath taken hold of us, and pain, as of a woman in travail. Ver. 25. Go not forth into the field, and in the way walk not; for a sword hath the enemy, fear is all around. Ver. 26. O daughter of my people, gird thee with sackcloth, and besprinkle thee with ashes; make mourning for an only son, bitter lamentation: for suddenly shall the spoiler come upon us. Ver. 27. For a trier have I set thee among my people as a strong tower, that thou mightest know and try their way. Ver. 28. They are all revolvers of revolvers; go about as slanderers; brass and iron; they are all dealing corruptingly. Ver. 29. Burned are the bellows by the fire, at an end is the lead; in vain they melt and melt; and wicked ones are not separated. Ver. 30. Rejected silver they call them, for Jahveh hath rejected them."

In ver. 22 the stumbling-blocks of ver. 21 are explained. At the end of this discourse yet again the invasion of the enemy from the far north is announced, cf. iv. 13 and v. 15, and its terribleness is portrayed with new colours. The farther the land is from which the enemy comes, the more strange and terrible he appears to the imagination. The farthest (hind-most) sides of the earth (cf. xxv. 32) is only a heightening of the idea: land of the north, or of the far distance (v. 15); in other words, the far uttermost north (cf. Isa. xiv. 13). In this notice of their home, Hitz. finds a proof that the enemies were the Scythians, not the Chaldeans; since, acc. to Ezek. xxxviii. 6, 15, and xxxix. 2, Gog, *i.e.* the Scythians, come "from the sides of the north." But "sides of the earth" is not a geographical term for any particular northern country, but only for very remote lands; and that the Chaldeans were reckoned as falling within this term, is shown by the passage xxxi. 8, according to which Israel is to be gathered again from the land of the north and from the sides of the earth. Here any connection with Scythia in "sides of the earth" is not to be thought of, since prophecy knows nothing of a captivity of

Israel in Scythia, but regards Assur and Babylon alone as the lands of the exile of Israelites and Jews. As weapons of the enemy then are mentioned bows (cf. iv. 29, v. 16), and the javelin or lance (פִּירֹן, not shield; see on 1 Sam. xvii. 6). It is cruel, knows no pity, and is so numerous and powerful, that its voice, *i.e.* the tumult of its approach, is like the roaring of the sea; cf. Isa. v. 30, xvii. 12. On horses they ride; cf. iv. 13, viii. 16, Hab. i. 8. עָרִיף in the singular, answering to "cruel it is," points back to גֹּי or עַם. בָּאִישׁ אֶחָד is not for בָּאִישׁ אֶחָד (Ros.), but for בָּאִישׁ מִלְחָמָה, cf. 1 Sam. xvii. 33, Isa. xlii. 13; and the genitive is omitted only because of the לְמִלְחָמָה coming immediately after (Graf). "Against thee" is dependent on עָרִיף: equipped as a warrior is equipped for the war, against the daughter of Zion. In vers. 24-26 are set forth the terrors and the suspense which the appearance of the foe will spread abroad. In ver. 24 the prophet, as a member of the people, gives utterance to its feelings. As to the sense, the clauses are to be connected thus: As soon as we hear the rumour of the people, *i.e.* of its approach, our hands become feeble through dread, all power to resist vanishes: cf. Isa. xiii. 7; and for the metaphor of travail, Isa. xiii. 8, Mic. iv. 9, etc. In ver. 28 the inhabitants of Jerusalem, personified as the daughter of Zion, are warned not to go forth of the city into the field or about the country, lest they fall into the enemies' hands and be put to death. מְנוּר מִפְּנֵי, often used by Jeremiah, cf. xx. 3, 10, xlv. 5, xlix. 29, and, as xx. 10 shows, taken from Ps. xxxi. 14. Fear or terrors around, *i.e.* on all sides danger and destruction threaten.—Ver. 26. Sores affliction will seize the inhabitants of Jerusalem. As to "daughter of my people," cf. iv. 11; on "gird thee with sackcloth," cf. iv. 8. To bestrew the head with ashes is a mode of expressing the greatest affliction; cf. Ezek. xxvii. 30, Mic. i. 10. יֵהִיר as in Amos viii. 10, Zech. xii. 10.

The closing verses of this discourse (27-30) are regarded by Hitz. as a meditation upon the results of his labours. "He was to try the people, and he found it to be evil." But in this he neglects the connection of these verses with the preceding. From the conclusion of ver. 30, "Jahveh hath rejected them," we may see that they stand connected in matter with the threatening of the spoiler; and the fact is put beyond a doubt

when we compare together the greater subdivisions of the present discourse. The vers. 27-30 correspond in substance with the view given in v. 30, 31 of the moral character of the people. As that statement shows the reasons for the threatening that God must take vengeance on such a people (v. 29), so what is said in the verses before us explain why it is threatened that a people approaching from the north will execute judgment without mercy on the daughter of Zion. For these verses do not tell us only the results of the prophet's past labours, but they at the same time indicate that his further efforts will be without effect. The people is like copper and iron, unproductive of either gold or silver; and so the smelting process is in vain. The illustration and the thing illustrated are not strictly discriminated in the statement. **בָּהֶן** is *adject. verb.* with active force: he that tries metal, that by smelting separates the slag from the gold and silver ore; cf. Zech. xiii. 9, Job xxiii. 10. **מִבְּצָר** creates a difficulty, and is very variously understood. The ancient comm. have interpreted it, according to i. 18, as either in a fortress, or as a fortress. So the Chald., changing **בָּהֶן** for **בְּחֹר**: *electum dedi te in populo meo, in urbe munita forti.* Jerome: *datur propheta populo incredulo probator robustus, quod ebraice dicitur מִבְּצָר, quod vel munitum juxta Aquil., vel clausum atque circumdatum juxta Symm. et LXX. sonat.* The extant text of the LXX. has *ἐν λαοῖς δεδοκιμασμένοις*. Following the usage of the language, we are justified only in taking **מִבְּצָר** as apposition to **בָּהֶן**, or to the suffix in **נִחְתִּיד**; in which case Luther's connection of it with **עַמִּי**, "among my people, which is so hard," will appear to be impossible. But again, it has been objected, not without reason, that the reference of "fortress" to Jeremiah is here opposed to the context, while in i. 18 it falls well in with it; consequently other interpretations have been attempted. Gaab, Maur., Hitz., have taken note of the fact that **בָּצָר** occurs in Job xxxvi. 19, like **בָּצָר** in the signification of gold; they take **מִבְּצָר** as a contraction for **מִן בָּצָר**, and expound: without gold, *i.e.* although then was there no gold, to try for which was thy task. To this view Graf has objected: the testing would be wholly purposeless, if it was already declared beforehand that there was no noble metal in the people. But this objection is not con-

clusive; for the testing could only have as its aim to exhibit the real character of the people, so as to bring home to the people's apprehension what was already well known to God. These are weightier considerations: 1. We cannot make sure of the meaning gold-ore for **בָּצֵר** by means of Job xxxvi. 19, since the interpretation there is open to dispute; and **בָּצֵר**, Job xxii. 24, does not properly mean gold, but unworked ore, though in its connection with the context we must understand virgin gold and silver ore in its natural condition. Here, accordingly, we would be entitled to translate only: without virgin ore, native metal. 2. The choice of a word so unusual is singular, and the connection of **מְבַצֵּר** with **עַמִּי** is still very harsh. Yet less satisfactory is the emendation defended by J. D. Mich., Dahl, Ew., and Graf, **מְבַצֵּר**: "for a trier have I made thee among my people, for a separator;" for **בָּצֵר** has in Heb. only the meaning cut off and fortify, and the Pi. occurs in Isa. xxii. 10 and Jer. li. 53 in the latter meaning, whereas the signif. separate, discriminate, can be maintained neither from Hebrew nor Arabic usage. The case being so, it seems to us that the interpretation acc. to i. 18 has most to be said for it: To be a trier have I set thee amid my people "as a strong tower;" and to this Ges., Dietr. in *Lex. s.v.*, adhere.—Ver. 28 gives a statement as to the moral character of the people. "Revolters of revoltors" is a kind of superlative, and **פָּרַר** is to be derived from **פָּרַר**, not from **פָּרַר**, perverse of perverse; or, as Hitz., imitating the Heb. phrase, rebels of the rebellious. Going about as slanderers, see on Lev. xix. 16, in order to bring others into difficulties; cf. Ezek. xxii. 9. To this is subjoined the figurative expression: brass and iron, *i.e.* ignoble metal as contrasted with gold and silver, cf. Ezek. xxii. 18; and to this, again, the unfigurative statement: they are all dealing corruptingly. **בְּשִׁחָתֵיהֶם**, cf. Isa. i. 4, Deut. xxxi. 29. There is no sufficient reason for joining **בָּלָם** with the preceding: brass and iron, as Hitz. and Graf do in defiance of the accents.—Ver. 29. The trial of the people has brought about no purification, no separation of the wicked ones. The trial is viewed under the figure of a long-continued but resultless process of smelting. **נָחַר**, Niph. from **חָרַר**, to be burnt, scorched, as in Ezek. xv. 4. **מֵאֲשָׁתָם** is to be broken up, as in the *Keri*, into two words: **מֵאֵשׁ** and **תָּם** (from **תָּמַם**). For

there does not occur any feminine form אֵשׁ from אֵש , nor any plural אֵשִׁים (even אֵשִׁים forms the plur. אֵשִׁים), so as to admit of our reading מֵאֵשִׁתָּם or מֵאֵשִׁתָּם . Nor would the plur., if there were one, be suitable; Ew.'s assertion that אֵשִׁים means flames of fire is devoid of all proof. We connect מֵאֵשׁ with what precedes: Burnt are the bellows with fire, at an end is the lead. Others attach "by the fire" to what follows: By the fire is the lead consumed. The thought is in either case the same, only אֵשִׁים is not the proper word for: to be consumed. Sense: the smelting has been carried on so perseveringly, that the bellows have been scorched by the heat of the fire, and the lead added in order to get the ore into fusion is used up; but they have gone on smelting quite in vain. וְצָרָה with indefinite subject, and the *inf. absol.* added to indicate the long duration of the experiment. In the last clause of the verse the result is mentioned in words without a figure: The wicked have not been separated out (prop., torn asunder from the mass).—Ver. 30. The final statement of the case: They call them (the whole people) rejected silver, *i.e.* they are recognised as such; for Jahveh has rejected them, has given over trying to make anything of them.

CHAP. VII.—X.—THE VANITY OF PUTTING TRUST IN THE
TEMPLE AND IN THE SACRIFICIAL SERVICE, AND THE
WAY TO SAFETY AND LIFE.

This discourse divides itself into three sections. Starting with the people's confident reliance in the possession of the temple and the legal sacrificial worship, Jeremiah in the first section, by pointing to the destruction of Shiloh, where in the old time the sanctuary of the ark of the covenant had been, shows that Jerusalem and Judah will not escape the fate of Shiloh and the kingdom of Ephraim, in case they persist in their stiffneckedness against the Lord their God (ch. vii. 1–viii. 3). For the confirmation of this threatening he goes on, in the second section, further to tell of the people's determined resistance to all reformation, and to set forth the terrible visitation which hardened continuance in sin draws down on itself (ch. viii. 4–ix. 21). To the same end he finally, in the third

section, points out the means of escape from impending destruction, showing that the way to safety and life lies in acknowledging the Lord as the only, everlasting, and almighty God, and in seeing the nothingness of the false gods; and, as the fruit of such knowledge, he inculcates the fear of the Lord, and self-humiliation under His mighty hand (ch. ix. 22-x. 25).

This discourse also was not uttered at any one particular time before the people in the temple, and in the shape in which it comes before us; but it has been gathered into one uniform whole, out of several oral addresses delivered in the temple by Jeremiah upon various occasions in the days of Josiah. According to ch. xxvi., Jeremiah, at the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim, and in the court of the temple before the people, uttered the threatening that if they would not hear the words addressed to them by the prophets, nor reform their lives, the Lord would make the temple like Shiloh, and make the city a curse to all nations. For this speech he was found worthy of death by the priests and false prophets, and was saved only through the interference of the princes of the people. Now the present discourse opposes to the people's vain confidence in the temple the solemn warning that the temple will share the fate of Shiloh; and hence many commentators, especially Graf and Näg., have inferred the identity of this with the discourse in ch. xxvi., and have referred its composition to the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign. But the agreement of the two chapters on this one point is not sufficient to justify such an inference. Jeremiah is wont often to repeat his leading thoughts in his discourses; and so it is not unlikely that more than once, during the eighteen years of his ministry under Josiah, he may have held up the fate of Shiloh and the sanctuary there, as a warning to the people which built its confidence on the possession of the temple and the performance of the legal cultus. If the foundation even of the first section of the present discourse were to be found in that given in ch. xxvi., taken in connection with the impression it made on the priests and prophets, with the violent feeling it excited, and the storm against Jeremiah which it called forth, then certainly the continuation of this discourse from vii. 16 onwards would have been something different from what we find it. In writing down the discourse,

Jeremiah would certainly not have passed immediately from threatening the people with the fate of Shiloh to the repudiation of all intercessory prayers, and to the statement there made as to the sacrificial service. This we mention without entering on the discussion of the other portions of the discourse. In the whole of the rest of the discourse, as continued ch. viii.-x., there is not the least trace of hostility against Jeremiah on the part of priests or people, or any hint of anything that would carry us beyond the time of Josiah into the reign of Jehoiakim.

Chap. vii. 1-viii. 3. WARNING AGAINST A FALSE TRUST IN THE TEMPLE AND THE SACRIFICIAL SERVICE.—The temple does not afford protection from the threatened punishment. If Judah does not change its manner of life, the temple will suffer the fate of Shiloh, and Judah will, like Ephraim, be rejected by the Lord (vers. 1-15). Neither intercession on behalf of the corrupt race, nor the multitude of its burnt and slain offerings, will turn aside from Jerusalem the visitation of wrath (vers. 16-28); for the Lord has cast away the hardened sinners on account of their idolatry, and will make Jerusalem and Judah a field of death (ver. 29-viii. 3).

Vers. 1-15. *The vanity of trusting in the temple.*—Ver. 1. “The word that came to Jeremiah from Jahveh, saying, Ver. 2. Stand in the gate of the house of Jahveh, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of Jahveh, all ye of Judah, that enter these gates to worship before Jahveh: Ver. 3. Thus hath spoken Jahveh of hosts, the God of Israel, Make your ways and your doings good, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. Ver. 4. Trust ye not in lying words, when they say, The temple of Jahveh, the temple of Jahveh, the temple of Jahveh, is this. Ver. 5. But if ye thoroughly make your ways good, and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute right amongst one another; Ver. 6. Oppress not stranger, fatherless, and widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither follow after other gods to your hurt; Ver. 7. Then I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land which I have given unto your fathers, from eternity unto eternity. Ver. 8. Behold, ye trust in lying words, though they profit not. Ver. 9. How? to steal, to murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and offer

odours to Baal, and to walk after other gods whom ye know not? Ver. 10. And then ye come and stand before my face in this house, upon which my name is named, and think, We are saved to do all these abominations. Ver. 11. Is then this house become a den of murderers, over which my name is named, in your eyes? I too, behold, have seen it, saith Jahveh. Ver. 12. For go ye now to my place which was at Shiloh, where I formerly caused my name to dwell, and see what I have done unto it for the wickedness of my people Israel. Ver. 13. And now, because ye do all these deeds, saith Jahveh, and I have spoken to you, speaking from early morning on, and ye have not heard; and I have called you, and ye have not answered; Ver. 14. Therefore I do unto this house, over which my name is named, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I have given to you and to your fathers, as I have done unto Shiloh. Ver. 15. And cast you away from my face, as I have cast away all your brethren, the whole seed of Ephraim."

Ver. 2. The gate of the temple into which the prophet was to go and stand, is doubtless one of the three gates of the inner or upper court, in which he could stand and address the people gathered before him in the outer court; perhaps the same in which Baruch read Jeremiah's prophecies to the people, xxxvi. 10 (Schnid, Hitz.). The gates through which the people entered to worship are those of the outer court. The form of address: All Judah, ye who enter, etc., warrant us in assuming that Jeremiah delivered this discourse at one of the great annual festivals, when the people were wont to gather to Jerusalem from the length and breadth of the land.—Ver. 3 contains the central idea of the discourse: it is only morally good endeavours and deeds that give the people a sure title to a long lease of the land. הַיִּטִּיב דְּרָכָה is not merely, amend one's conduct; but, make one's way good, *i.e.* lead a good life. The "ways" mean the tendency of life at large, the "doings" are the individual manifestations of that tendency; cf. xviii. 11, xxvi. 13. "In this place," *i.e.* in the land that I have given to your fathers; cf. ver. 7 and xiv. 13 with ver. 15, xxiv. 5, 6. Positive exhortation to a pure life is followed by negative dehortation from putting trust in the illusion: The temple, etc. The threefold repetition of the same word is the most marked way

of laying very great emphasis upon it; cf. xxii. 29, Isa. vi. 3. "These," these halls, the whole complex mass of buildings (Hitz.), as in 2 Chron. viii. 11; and here הֵמָּה has the force of the neuter; cf. Ew. § 318, *b*. The meaning of this emphatic way of mentioning the temple of the Lord is, in this connection, the following: Jerusalem cannot be destroyed by enemies, because the Lord has consecrated for the abode of His name that temple which is in Jerusalem; for the Lord will not give His sanctuary, the seat of His throne, to be a prey to the heathen, but will defend it, and under its protection we too may dwell safely. In the temple of the Lord we have a sure pledge for unbroken possession of the land and the maintenance of the kingdom. Cf. the like discourse in Mic. iii. 11, "Jahveh is in our midst, upon us none evil can come." This passage likewise shows that the "lying words" quoted are the sayings of the false prophets, whereby they confirmed the people in their secure sinfulness; the mass of the people at the same time so making these sayings their own as to lull themselves into the sense of security.—Ver. 5. Over against such sayings Jeremiah puts that which is the indispensable condition of continued sojourn in the land. וְ, ver. 5, after a preceding negative clause, means: but on the contrary. This condition is a life morally good, that shall show itself in doing justice, in putting away all unrighteousness, and in giving up idolatry. With אֲנִי begins a list of the things that belong to the making of one's ways and doings good. The adjunct to בֵּין יְדָיִם, right, "between the man and his neighbour," shows that the justice meant is that they should help one man to his rights against another. The law attached penalties to the oppression of those who needed protection—strangers, orphans, widows; cf. Ex. xxii. 21 ff., Deut. xxiv. 17 ff., xxvii. 19; and the prophets often denounce the same; cf. Isa. i. 17, 23, x. 2, Ezek. xxii. 7, Zech. vii. 10, Mal. iii. 5, Ps. xciv. 6, etc. אֶל-הַשָּׂפָן for 'לֹא-חַ' is noteworthy, but is not a simple equivalent for it. Like οὐ μὴ, אֶל implies a deeper interest on the part of the speaker, and the sense here is: and ye be really determined not to shed innocent blood (cf. Ew. § 320, *b*). Hitz.'s explanation, that אֶל is equal to לֹא-אֶשָּׁר or לֹא-אֵם, and that it here resumes again the now remote אֲנִי, is overturned by the consideration that אֶל is not at the be-

ginning of the clause; and there is not the slightest probability in Graf's view, that the ^ל must have come into the text through the copyist, who had in his mind the similar clause in xxii. 3. Shedding innocent blood refers in part to judicial murders (condemnation of innocent persons), in part to violent attacks made by the kings on prophets and godly men, such as we hear of in Manasseh's case, 2 Kings xxi. 16. In this place (ver. 7), *i.e.* first and foremost Jerusalem, the metropolis, where moral corruption had its chief seat; in a wider sense, however, it means the whole kingdom of Judah (vers. 3 and 7). "To your hurt" belongs to all the above-mentioned transgressions of the law; cf. xxv. 7. "In the land," etc., explains "this place." "From eternity to eternity" is a rhetorically heightened expression for the promise given to the patriarchs, that God would give the land of Canaan to their posterity for an everlasting possession, Gen. xvii. 8; although here it belongs not to the relative clause, "that I gave," but to the principal clause, "cause you to dwell," as in Ex. xxxii. 13.

In ver. 8 there is a recurrence to the warning of ver. 4, under the form of a statement of fact; and in vers. 9-11 it is expanded to this effect: The affirmation that the temple of the Lord affords protection is a sheer delusion, so long as all God's commandments are being audaciously broken. לִבְלִיתִי הוֹעִיל, lit. to no profiting: ye rely on lying words, without there being any possibility that they should profit you.—Ver. 9. The query before the *infin. absol.* is the expression of wonder and indignation; and the infinitives are used with special emphasis for the *verb. fin.*: How? to steal, kill, etc., is your practice, and then ye come. . . .—Ver. 10. Breaches of almost all the commandments are specified; first the eighth, sixth, and seventh of the second table, and then two commandments of the first table; cf. Hos. iv. 2. Swearing falsely is an abuse of God's name. In "offer odours to Baal," Baal is the representation of the false gods. The phrase, *other* gods, points to the first commandment, Ex. xx. 3; and the relative clause: whom ye knew not, stands in opposition to: I am Jahveh your God, who hath brought you out of Egypt. They knew not the other gods, because they had not made themselves known to them in benefits and blessings; cf. xix. 4. While they so daringly

break all God's commands, they yet come before His face in the temple which Jahveh has chosen to reveal His name there. 'אֲשֶׁר נִקְרָא בְּנִי is not: which bears my name (Hitz.); or: on which my name is bestowed, which is named after me (Graf). The name of Jahveh is the revelation of Himself, and the meaning is: on which I have set my glory, in which I have made my glorious being known; see on Deut. xxviii. 10 and Amos ix. 12. We are saved, *sc.* from all the evils that threaten us, *i.e.* we are concealed, have nothing to fear; cf. Ezek. xiv. 16, 18, Amos iii. 12. The perfect *denotat firmam persuasionem incolumitatis*. Ch. B. Mich. By changing נִצְּלָנִי into נִצְּלֵנִי, as Ewald, following the Syr., reads, the sense is weakened. לְמַעַן עָשִׂיתָ וְעַתָּה is neither: as regards what we have done, nor: because = while or whereas ye have done (Hitz.), but: in order to do, that ye may do. לְמַעַן with the *infin.*, as with the *perf.*, has never the signif., because of or in reference to something past and done, but always means, with the view of doing something; English: to the end that. The thought is simply this: Ye appear in my temple to sacrifice and worship, thinking thus to appease my wrath and turn aside all punishment, that so ye may go on doing all these (in ver. 9 enumerated) abominations. By frequenting the temple, they thought to procure an indulgence for their wicked ongoings, not merely for what they had already done, but for what they do from day to day.—Ver. 11. To expose the senselessness of such an idea, God asks if they take the temple for a den of robbers? “In your eyes” goes with הֲיָה: is it become in your eyes, *i.e.* do ye take it for such? If thieves, murderers, adulterers, etc., gathered to the temple, and supposed that by appearing there they procured the absolution of their sins, they were in very act declaring the temple to be a robbers' retreat. פֶּרֶץ, the violent, here: the house-breaker, robber. I, too, have seen, *sc.* that the temple is made by you a den of thieves, and will deal accordingly. This completion of the thought appears from the context.—Ver. 12. The temple is to undergo the fate of the former sanctuary at Shiloh. This threat is introduced by a grounding כִּי, for. This *for* refers to the central idea of the last verse, that they must not build their expectations on the temple, hold it to be a pledge for their safety. For since the Lord has seen

how they have profaned and still profane it, He will destroy it, as the sanctuary at Shiloh was destroyed. The rhetorical mode of utterance, Go to the place, etc., contributes to strengthen the threatening. They were to behold with their own eyes the fate of the sanctuary at Shiloh, that so they might understand that the sacredness of a place does not save it from overthrow, if men have desecrated it by their wickedness. We have no historical notice of the event to which Jeremiah refers. At Shiloh, now *Seilân* (in ruins), the Mosaic tabernacle was erected after the conquest of Canaan (Josh. xviii. 1), and there it was still standing in the time of the high priest Eli, 1 Sam. i. 1-3; but the ark, which had fallen into the hands of the Philistines at the time of their victory (1 Sam. iv.), was not brought back to the tabernacle when it was restored again to the Israelites. In the reign of Saul we find the tabernacle at Nob (1 Sam. xxi. 2 ff.). The words of ver. 12 intimate, that at that time "the place of God at Shiloh" was lying in ruins. As Hitz. justly remarks, the destruction of it is not to be understood of its gradual decay after the removal of the ark (1 Sam. iv. 11, vii. 1 ff.); the words imply a devastation or destruction, not of the place of God at Shiloh only, but of the place Shiloh itself. This is clearly seen from ver. 14: I will do unto this house (the temple), and the place which I gave to your fathers, as I have done unto Shiloh. This destruction did not take place when the Assyrians overthrew the kingdom of the ten tribes, but much earlier. It may, indeed, be gathered from Judg. xviii. 20, 31 (see the comment. on this passage), that it was as early as the time of Saul, during a Syrian invasion. By the destruction of the place of God at Shiloh, we need not understand that the tabernacle itself, with its altar and other sacred furniture (except the ark), was swept away. Such a view is contradicted by the statement in 1 Chron. xxi. 29, 2 Chron. i. 3, according to which the tabernacle built by Moses in the wilderness was still standing at Gibeon in David's time, and in the beginning of Solomon's reign; cf. with 2 Chron. i. 5, when the brazen altar of burnt-offering is expressly mentioned as that which was made by Bezaleel. Hence it is clear that the Mosaic tabernacle, with its altar of burnt-offering, had been preserved, and consequently that it must have been moved first from

Shiloh to Nob, and then, when Saul sacked this town (1 Sam. xxii.), to Gibeon. The destruction of the place of God in Shiloh must accordingly have consisted in this, that not only was the tabernacle with the altar carried off from thence, but the buildings necessary in connection with the maintenance of the public worship which surrounded it were swept away when the city was plundered, so that of the place of the sanctuary nothing was left remaining. It is clear that about the tabernacle there were various buildings which, along with the tabernacle and its altars, constituted "the house of God at Shiloh;" for in 1 Sam. iii. we are told that Samuel slept in the temple of Jahveh (ver. 3), and that in the morning he opened the doors of the house of God (ver. 15). Hence we may gather, that round about the court of the tabernacle there were buildings erected, which were used partly as a dwelling-place for the officiating priests and Levites, and partly for storing up the heave-offerings, and for preparing the thank-offerings at the sacrificial meals (1 Sam. ii. 11-21). This whole system of buildings surrounding the tabernacle, with its court and altar of burnt-offering, was called the "house of God;" from which name Graf erroneously inferred that there was at Shiloh a temple like the one in Jerusalem. The wickedness of my people, is the Israelites' fall into idolatry in Eli's time, because of which the Lord gave up Israel into the power of the Philistines and other enemies (Judg. xiii. 1; cf. 1 Sam. vii. 3). "These deeds" (ver. 13) are the sins named in ver. 9. וְאֵלֶּיךָ is a continuation of the infinitive sentence, and is still dependent on יֵן. Speaking from early morn, *i.e.* speaking earnestly and unremittingly; cf. Gesen. § 131, 3, *b.* I have called you, *i.e.* to repent, and ye have not answered, *i.e.* have not repented and turned to me.—Ver. 15. I cast you out from my sight, *i.e.* drive you forth amongst the heathen; cf. Deut. xxix. 27; and with the second clause cf. 2 Kings xvii. 20. The whole seed of Ephraim is the ten tribes.

Vers. 16-28. *This punishment will be turned aside, neither by intercession, because the people refuses to give up its idolatry, nor by sacrifice, which God desires not, because for long they have turned to Him the back and not the face, and have not hearkened to His words.*—Ver. 16. "But thou, pray not for this people,

and lift not up for them cry and prayer ; and urge me not, for I do not hear thee. Ver. 17. Seest thou not what they do in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem ? Ver. 18. The sons gather sticks, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead dough, to make cakes for the Queen of heaven, and to pour out drink-offerings unto other gods, to provoke me. Ver. 19. Provoke they me, saith Jahveh, not themselves, to the shaming of their face ? Ver. 20. Therefore thus saith the Lord Jahveh, Behold, mine anger and my fury shall be poured out on this place, upon man, upon beast, upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of the ground ; and shall burn, and not be quenched. Ver. 21. Thus saith Jahveh of hosts, the God of Israel : Your burnt-offerings add to your slain-offerings, and eat flesh. Ver. 22. For I spake not with your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning the matters of burnt-offering or slain-offering. Ver. 23. But this word commanded I them, saying, Hearken to my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people ; and walk in the way which I command you, that it may be well with you. Ver. 24. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, and walked in the counsels, in the stubbornness of their evil heart, and turned to me the back, and not the face. Ver. 25. Since the day that your fathers went forth of the land of Egypt until this day, I sent to you all my servants the prophets, daily from early morn sending them ; Ver. 26. But they hearkened not to me, nor inclined their ear, and were stiffnecked, and did worse than their fathers. Ver. 27. And though thou speakest all these words unto them, yet will they not hearken unto thee ; and though thou callest unto them, yet will they not answer thee. Ver. 28. Thus speak to them : This is the people that hearken not unto the voice of Jahveh its God, and that receive not correction. Perished is faithfulness, cut off from their mouth."

The purport of ver. 16, that God will not suffer Himself to be moved by any entreaties to revoke the doom pronounced on the wicked people, is expressed by way of a command from God to the prophet not to pray for the people. That Jeremiah did sometimes pray thus, however, we see from xiv. 19 ff. (cf. xviii. 20), when to his prayer the same answer is given as we have

here, and all intercession for the corrupt race is characterized as in vain. The second clause: lift not up for them crying, *i.e.* supplicatory prayer, expresses the same, only more strongly; while the third clause: urge me not, cuts off all hope of success from even the most importunate intercession. The reason for this command to desist is shown in ver. 17, by a reference to the idolatry which was openly practised throughout the land by young and old, men and women. Each takes part according to strength and capacity: the sons gather wood together, the fathers set the fire in order, etc. The deity so zealously worshipped by the people is called the Queen of heaven, and is mentioned only by Jeremiah. Besides here, there is reference to her in xlv. 17, where we see that her worship was very diligently cultivated, and that she was adored as the bestower of earthly possessions. (מְלִכָּה is *stat. constr.*, either from the Chald. form מְלִיָּה, or from מְלִיכָה, after the analogy of מְבַרָּךְ, *st. constr.* of מְבַרָּךְ; but perhaps it has מְלִכָּה in *stat. abs.*) This worship was combined with that of the stars, the host of heaven, which especially prevailed under Manasseh (2 Kings xxi. 5). Thence it may be presumed that the Queen of heaven was one of the deities who came to Western Asia with the Assyrians, and that she corresponds to the Assyrian-Persian *Tanis* and *Artemis*, who in the course of time took the place once occupied by the closely related Phœnician Astarte. She is originally a deification of the moon, the Assyrian *Selene* and *Virgo cœlestis*, who, as supreme female deity, was companion to *Baal-Moloch* as sun-god; cf. Movers, *Phönizier*, i. S. 623 ff. With this accords the statement of Steph. Byz., that *σελήνη* is also *πήπανόν τι τῷ ἄστρῳ παραπλήσιον*. The offerings which, acc. to this verse and ch. xlv. 19, were brought to her, are called פִּנְיִים, a word which would appear to have come to the Hebrews along with the foreign cultus. By the LXX. it was Grecized into *χαυῶνας*, for which we find in glossators and *codd.* *καυῶνας* and *χαβῶνας*. They were, acc. to the *Etymol. magn.* and Suidas, *ἄρτοι ἐλαίῳ ἀναφυραθέντες* or *λάχανα ὅπτα* (? cooked vegetables); acc. to Jerome, *χαυῶνας*, *quas nos placentas interpretati sumus*. In any case, they were some kind of sacrificial cakes, which Vit. put alongside of the *πόπανα* of Aristophanes and Lucian; cf. the various interpretations in Schleussner, *Lexic. in LXX.*

s.v. *χαιών*. These cakes were kindled on the altar (cf. מִקְטָרִים, xliv. 19) as a kind of *Minchah* (meat-offering), and with this *Minchah* a libation or drink-offering (נִסְכִּים) was combined. הִפִּיחַ corresponds to לַעֲשׂוֹת, so that לַ has to be repeated; cf. xliv. 19, 25, where we find libations poured out to the Queen of heaven. In the 18th verse the expression is generalized into "other gods," with reference to the fact that the service of the Queen of heaven was but one kind of idolatry along with others, since other strange gods were worshipped by sacrifices and libations. To provoke me; cf. Deut. xxxi. 29, xxxii. 16, etc.—Ver. 19. But instead of vexing Him (Jahveh) they rather vex themselves, inasmuch as God causes the consequences of their idolatry to fall on their own head. אָתָם is used reflexively: *se ipsos*; cf. Ew. § 314, c; Gesen. § 124, 1, b. For the cause of the shame of their face, i.e. to prepare for themselves the shame of their face, to cover their face with shame; cf. iii. 25.—For (ver. 20) because of this idolatrous work, the wrath of the Lord will pour itself over the land in the consuming fire of war (cf. iv. 4 with v. 17, Nah. i. 6, etc.), so as to cut off men and beasts, trees and fruit.—Ver. 21. The multiplication of burnt and slain offerings will not avert judgment. Your burnt-offerings add to your slain-offerings. In the case of the זֶבַחִים, the greater part of the flesh was eaten at the sacrificial meals by those who brought them. Along with these they might put the burnt-offerings, which were wont to be burnt entire upon the altar, and eat them also. The words express indignation at the sacrifices of those who were so wholly alienated from God. God had so little pleasure in their sacrifices, that they might eat of the very burnt-offerings.

To show the reason of what is here said, Jeremiah adds, in ver. 22, that God had not commanded their fathers, when He led them out of Egypt, in the matter of burnt and slain offerings, but this word: "Hearken to my voice, and I will be your God," etc. The *Keri* הוֹצִיאִי is a true exegesis, acc. to xi. 4, xxxiv. 13, but is unnecessary; cf. Gen. xxiv. 30, xxv. 26, etc. This utterance has been erroneously interpreted by the majority of commentators, and has been misused by modern criticism to make good positions as to the late origin of the Pentateuch. To understand it aright, we must carefully take

into consideration not merely the particular terms of the present passage, but the context as well. In the two verses as they stand there is the antithesis: Not *עַל דְּבַרִּי עוֹלָה וְחָבָה* did God speak and give command to the fathers, when He led them out of Egypt, but commanded the word: Harken to my voice, etc. The last word immediately suggests Ex. xix. 5: If ye will hearken to my voice, then shall ye be my peculiar treasure out of all peoples; and it points to the beginning of the law-giving, the decalogue, and the fundamental principles of the law of Israel, in Ex. xx.-xxiii., made known in order to the conclusion of the covenant in xxiv., after the arrival at Sinai of the people marching from Egypt. The promise: Then will I be your God, etc., is not given in these precise terms in Ex. xix. 5 ff.; but it is found in the account of Moses' call to be the leader of the people in their exodus, Ex. vi. 7; and then repeatedly in the promises of covenant blessings, if Israel keep all the commandments of God, Lev. xxvi. 12, Deut. xxvi. 18. Hence it is clear that Jeremiah had before his mind the taking of the covenant, but did not bind himself closely to the words of Ex. xix. 5, adopting his expression from the passages of Leviticus and Deuteronomy which refer to and reaffirm that transaction. If there be still any doubt on this head, it will be removed by the clause: and walk in *all* the way which I command you this day (*והלכתם* is a continuation of the imper. *שִׁמְעוּ*). The expression: to walk in *all* the way God has commanded, is so unusual, that it occurs only once besides in the whole Old Testament, viz. Deut. v. 30, after the renewed inculcation of the ten commandments. And they then occur with the addition *לִמְעַן תַּחֲיוּ וְטוֹב לָכֶם*, in which we cannot fail to recognise the *לִמְעַן יִיטֵב לָכֶם* of our verse. Hence we assume, without fear of contradiction, that Jeremiah was keeping the giving of the law in view, and specially the promulgation of the fundamental law of the book, namely of the decalogue, which was spoken by God from out of the fire on Sinai, as Moses in Deut. v. 23 repeats with marked emphasis. In this fundamental law we find no prescriptions as to burnt or slain offerings. On this fact many commentators, following Jerome, have laid stress, and suppose the prophet to be speaking of the first act of the law-giving, arguing that the Torah of offering in the Pentateuch was called for first by the worship of the

golden calf, after which time God held it to be necessary to give express precepts as to the presenting of offerings, so as to prevent idolatry. But this view does not at all agree with the historical fact. For the worship of the calf was subsequent to the law on the building of the altar on which Israel was to offer burnt and slain offerings, Ex. xx. 24; to the institution of the daily morning and evening sacrifice, Ex. xxix. 38 ff.; and to the regulation as to the place of worship and the consecration of the priests, Ex. xxv.-xxxi. But besides, any difficulty in our verses is not solved by distinguishing between a first and a second law-giving, since no hint of any such contrast is found in our verse, but is even entirely foreign to the precise terms of it. The antithesis is a different one. The stress in ver. 23 lies on: hearken to the voice of the Lord, and on walking in all the way which God commanded to the people at Sinai. "To walk in all the way God commanded" is in substance the same as "not to depart from all the words which I command you this day," as Moses expands his former exhortation in Deut. xxviii. 14, when he is showing the blessings of keeping the covenant. Harkening to God's voice, and walking in all His commandments, are the conditions under which Jahveh will be a God to the Israelites, and Israel a people to Him, *i.e.* His peculiar people from out of all the peoples of the earth. This word of God is not only the centre of the act of taking the covenant, but of the whole Sinaitic law-giving; and it is so both with regard to the moral law and to the ceremonial precepts, of which the law of sacrifice constituted the chief part. If yet the words demanding the observance of the whole law be set in opposition to the commandments as to sacrifices, and if it be said that on this latter head God commanded nothing when He led Israel out of Egypt, then it may be replied that the meaning of the words cannot be: God has given no law of sacrifice, and desires no offerings. The sense can only be: When the covenant was entered into, God did not speak *עַל דְּבָרֵי*, *i.e.* as to the matters of burnt and slain offerings. *עַל דְּבָרֵי* is not identical with *עַל-דְּבָר*. *דְּבָרֵי עוֹלָה* are words or things that concern burnt and slain offerings; that is, practically, detailed prescriptions regarding sacrifice.

The purport of the two verses is accordingly as follows:

When the Lord entered into covenant with Israel at Sinai, He insisted on their hearkening to His voice and walking in all His commandments, as the condition necessary for bringing about the covenant relationship, in which He was to be God to Israel, and Israel a people to Him; but He did not at that time give all the various commandments as to the presenting of sacrifices. Such an intimation neither denies the divine origin of the Torah of sacrifice in Leviticus, nor discredits its character as a part of the Sinaitic legislation.¹ All it implies is, that the giving of sacrifices is not the thing of primary importance in the law, is not the central point of the covenant laws, and that so long as the cardinal precepts of the decalogue are freely transgressed, sacrifices neither are desired by God, nor secure covenant blessings for those who present them. That this is what is meant is shown by the connection in which our verse stands. The words: that God did not give command as to sacrifice, refer to the sacrifices brought by a people that recklessly broke all the commandments of the decalogue (ver. 9 f.), in the thought that by means of these sacrifices they were proving themselves

¹ After Vatke's example, Hitz. and Graf find in our verses a testimony against the Mosaic origin of the legislation of the Pentateuch as a whole, and they conclude "that at the time of Jeremiah nothing was known of a legislation on sacrifice given by God on Sinai." Here, besides interpreting our verses erroneously, they cannot have taken into account the fact that Jeremiah himself insists on the law of the Sabbath, xvii. 20 ff.; that amongst the blessings in which Israel will delight in Messianic times yet to come, he accounts the presenting of burnt, slain, and meat offerings, xvii. 26, xxxi. 14, xxxiii. 11, 18. It is consequently impossible that, without contradicting himself, Jeremiah could have disallowed the sacrificial worship. The assertion that he did so is wholly incompatible with the fact recorded in 2 Kings xxii., the discovery of the book of the law of Moses in the temple, in the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign; and that, too, whether, justly interpreting the passage, we hold the book of the law to be the Pentateuch, or whether, following the view maintained by the majority of modern critics, we take it to be the book of Deuteronomy, which was then for the first time composed and given to the king as Moses' work. For in Deuteronomy also the laws on sacrifice are set forth as a divine institution. Is it credible or conceivable, that in a discourse delivered, as most recent commentators believe, in the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign, Jeremiah should have spoken of the laws on sacrifice as not commanded by God? For in so doing he would have undermined the authority of the book of the law, on which his entire prophetic labours were based.

to be the covenant people, and that to them as such God was bound to bestow the blessings of His covenant. It is therefore with justice that Oehler, in Herzog's *Realencykl.* xii. S. 228, says: "In the sense that the righteousness of the people and the continuance of its covenant relationship were maintained by sacrifice as such—in this sense Jahveh did not ordain sacrifices in the Torah." Such a soulless service of sacrifice is repudiated by Samuel in 1 Sam. xv. 22, when he says to Saul: Hath Jahveh delight in burnt and slain offerings, as in hearkening to the voice of Jahveh? Behold, to hearken is better than sacrifice, etc. So in Ps. xl. 7, l. 8 ff., li. 18, and Isa. i. 11 f., Jer. vi. 20, Amos v. 22. What is here said differs from these passages only in this: Jeremiah does not simply say that God has no pleasure in such sacrifices, but adds the inference that the Lord does not desire the sacrifices of a people that have fallen away from Him. This Jeremiah gathers from the history of the giving of the law, and from the fact that, when God adopted Israel as His people, He demanded not sacrifices, but their obedience to His word and their walking in His ways. The design of Jeremiah's addition was the more thoroughly to crush all such vain confidence in sacrifices.

Ver. 24 ff. But they have not regarded that which was foremost and most cardinal in the law. They hearkened not, *sc.* to my voice; and instead of walking in the ways commanded, they walked in the counsels of the stubbornness of their evil heart. *בְּמַעֲצוֹת* is *stat. absol.*, and *בְּשִׁירְרוֹת* is co-ordinated with it in apposition, instead of being subordinated; cf. Ew. § 289, c. The LXX. have not seen their way to admit such a co-ordination, and so have omitted the second term; and in this, Movers, Hitz., and Graf have followed them, deleting the word as a mere gloss. As to "the stubbornness of their evil heart," see on iii. 17. *יָהִי לִאָּחֹזֶר*, they were backwards, not forwards, *i.e.* they so walked as to turn to me the back and not the face. *הָיָה* with *ל* expresses the direction or aim of a thing. The subject to these clauses is the Israelites from the time of Moses down to that of Jeremiah. This is shown by the continuation of the same idea in vers. 25 and 26. From the time the fathers were led out of Egypt till the present time, God has with anxious care been sending prophets to exhort and warn them;

but they have not hearkened, they have made their neck hard, *i.e.* were stiffnecked, and did worse than their fathers, *i.e.* each succeeding generation did more wickedly than that which preceded it. On לִנְיָוִים (the period) from the day . . . until . . . cf. the remarks on Hagg. ii. 18. The לִנְיָוִים gives to the mention of the time the value of an independent clause, to which that which is said regarding that time is joined by ו consec. יוֹם is adverbial accusative: by the day, *i.e.* daily, in early morn, *i.e.* with watchful care sending (on this expression, see at ver. 13). יוֹם acquires this sense, not in virtue of its standing for יוֹם, but by reason of its connection with the two infinitives *absoll.*—Ver. 27. Just as little will they listen to Jeremiah's words. וְיִפְרָח with ו consec. is properly: Speak to them, and they will not hearken to thee, for: Even if thou speakest to them, they will not hearken to thee.—Ver. 28. Hence the prophet will be bound to say to them: This is the people that hath not hearkened to the voice of God. On this Chr. B. Mich. makes this remark: *Etsi adhortationibus tuis non obedient, tamen, ut sciant quales sint et quæ pænæ ipsos maneant, dicas eis.* Perished or gone is faithfulness, and cut off out of their mouth. They have violated the fidelity they owed to God, by not hearkening to His voice, by breaking all His commandments (cf. vers. 23 and 9). "Out of their mouth" is used instead of "out of the heart," because they continually make profession with their mouth of their devotion to God, *e.g.* swear by Jahveh, but always lyingly, ver. 2.

Ver. 29—chap. viii. 3. *Therefore the Lord has rejected the backsliding people, so that it shall perish shamefully.*—Ver. 29. "Cut off thy diadem (daughter of Zion), and cast it away, and lift up a lamentation on the bald peaked mountains; for the Lord hath rejected and cast out the generation of His wrath. Ver. 30. For the sons of Judah have done the evil in mine eyes, saith Jahveh, have put their abominations in the house on which my name is named, to pollute it; Ver. 31. And have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of Benhinnom, to burn their sons and daughters in the fire; which I have not commanded, neither came it into my heart. Ver. 32. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith Jahveh, that they shall no longer say, Tophet and Valley of Benhinnom, but, The valley of slaughter, and they shall bury in Tophet for want of room. Ver. 33. And

the carcases of this people shall be meat for the fowls of heaven and the beasts of the earth, with no one to fray them away. Ver. 34. And I make to cease out of the cities of Judah and from the streets of Jerusalem, the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride; for a waste shall the land become. Chap. viii. 1. At that time, saith Jahveh, they shall bring out the bones of the kings of Judah and the bones of his princes, the bones of the priests and the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, out of their graves. Ver. 2. And they shall spread them before the sun, and the moon, and all the host of heaven, which they have loved, and which they have served, after which they have walked, and which they have sought and worshipped: they shall not be gathered nor buried; for dung upon the face of the earth shall they be. Ver. 3. And death shall be chosen rather than life by all the residue which is left of this evil race, in all the places whither I have driven them that are left, saith Jahveh of hosts."

In these verses the judgment of ver. 20 is depicted in all its horror, and the description is introduced by a call upon Zion to mourn and lament for the evil awaiting Jerusalem and the whole land. It is not any particular woman that is addressed in ver. 29, but the daughter of Zion (cf. vi. 23), *i.e.* the capital city personified as a woman, as the mother of the whole people. Cut off קַדְדָּו, thy diadem. There can be no doubt that we are by this to understand the hair of the woman; but the current opinion, that the word simply and directly means the hair, is without foundation. It means crown, originally the diadem of the high priest, Ex. xxix. 6; and the transference of the same word to the hair of the head is explained by the practice of the Nazarites, to wear the hair uncut as a mark of consecration to the Lord, Num. vi. 5. The hair of the Nazarite is called in Num. vi. 7 the consecration (קִדְּשׁוֹ) of his God upon his head, as was the anointing oil on the head of the high priest, Lev. xxi. 12. In this sense the long hair of the daughter of Zion is called her diadem, to mark her out as a virgin consecrated to the Lord. Cutting off this hair is not only in token of mourning, as in Job i. 20, Mic. i. 16, but in token of the loss of the consecrated character. The Nazarite, defiled by the sudden

occurrence of death near to his person, was bound to cut off his long hair, because by this defilement his consecrated hair had been defiled; and just so must the daughter of Zion cut off her hair and cast it from her, because by her sins she had defiled herself, and must be held as unconsecrated. Venema and Ros. object to this reference of the idea to the consecrated hair of the Nazarite: *quod huc non quadrat, nec in fœminis adeo suetum erat*; but this objection is grounded on defective apprehension of the meaning of the Nazarite's vow, and on misunderstanding of the figurative style here employed. The allusion to the Nazarite order, for the purpose of representing the daughter of Zion as a virgin consecrated to the Lord, does not imply that the Nazarite vow was very common amongst women. Deprived of her holy ornament, Zion is to set up a lament upon bare hill-tops (cf. iii. 21), since the Lord has rejected or cast out (ver. 30) the generation that has drawn His wrath down on it, because they have set idols in the temple in which He has revealed His glory, to profane it. The abominations are the image of Asherah which Manasseh set up in the temple, and the altars he had built to the host of heaven in both the courts (2 Kings xxi. 5, 7). Besides the desecration of the temple of the Lord by idolatry, Jeremiah mentions in ver. 31, as an especially offensive abomination, the worship of Moloch practised in the valley of Benhinnom. Here children were burnt to this deity, to whom Manasseh had sacrificed his son, 2 Kings xxi. 6. The expression "high altars of *Tophet*" is singular. In the parallel passages, where Jeremiah repeats the same subject, xix. 5 and xxxii. 35, we find mentioned instead high altars of Baal; and on this ground, Hitz. and Graf hold תַּחֲתַּי in our verse to be a contemptuous name for Baal Moloch. תַּחֲתַּי is not derived from the Persian; nor is it true that, as Hitz. asserts, it does not occur till after the beginning of the Assyrian period, since we have it in Job xvii. 6. It is formed from תָּהַךְ, to spit out, like נָפַת from נָהַךְ; and means properly a spitting out, then that before or on which one spits (as in Job xvii. 6), object of deepest abhorrence. It is transferred to the worship of Moloch here and xix. 6, 13 ff., and in 2 Kings xxiii. 10. In the latter passage the word is unquestionably used for the place in the valley of Benhinnom where children were offered to

Moloch. So in Jer. xix. 6, 13 (the place of Tophet), and 14; and so also, without a doubt, in ver. 32 of the present chapter. There is no valid reason for departing from this well-ascertained local signification; "high altars of Tophet" may perfectly well be the high altars of the place of abominable sacrifices. With the article the word means the ill-famed seat of the Moloch-worship, situated in the valley of Ben or Bne Hinnom, to the south of Jerusalem. *Hinnom* is *nomen propr.* of a man of whom we know nothing else, and בְּנֵי הִנּוֹם (בֶּנֶי) is not an appellative: son of sobbing, as Hitz., Graf, Böttcher explain (after Rashi), rendering the phrase by "Valley of the weepers," or "of groaning, sobbing," with reference to the cries of the children slain there for sacrifices. For the name *Ben-Hinnom* is much older than the Moloch-worship, introduced first by Ahaz and Manasseh. We find it in Josh. xv. 8, xviii. 16, in the topographical account of the boundaries of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. As to Moloch-worship, see on Lev. xviii. 21 and Ezek. xvi. 20 f. At the restoration of the public worship of Jahveh, Josiah had extirpated Moloch-worship, and had caused the place of the sacrifice of abominations in the valley of Ben-Hinnom to be defiled (2 Kings xxiii. 20); so that it is hardly probable that it had been again restored immediately after Josiah's death, at the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign. Nor does the present passage imply this; for Jer. is not speaking of the forms of idolatry at that time in favour with the Jews, but of the abominations they had done. That he had Manasseh's doings especially in view, we may gather from chap. xv. 4, where the coming calamities are expressly declared to be the punishment for Manasseh's sins. Neither is it come into my heart, *i.e.* into my mind, goes to strengthen: which I have not commanded.—Ver. 32. Therefore God will make the place of their sins the scene of judgment on the sinners. There shall come days when men will call the valley of these abominations the valley of slaughter, *i.e.* shall make it into such a valley. Where they have sacrificed their children to Moloch, they shall themselves be slaughtered, massacred by their enemies. And in this valley, as an unclean place (xix. 13), shall they be buried "for want of room;" since, because of the vast numbers of the slain, there will be nowhere else to put

them.—Ver. 33. Even the number of the dead will be so great that the corpses shall remain unburied, shall become food for beasts of prey, which no one will scare away. This is taken almost literally from Deut. xxviii. 26.—Ver. 34. Thus the Lord will put an end to all joyfulness in life throughout the land: cf. Hos. ii. 13; Ezek. xxvi. 13. The voice of the bridegroom and the bride is a circumlocution for the mirth of marriage festivities; cf. 1 Macc. ix. 39. All joy will be dumb, for the land shall become a waste; as the people had been warned, in Lev. xxvi. 31, 33, would be the case if they forsook the Lord.

Chap. viii. 1–3. But even then the judgment has not come to a height. Even sinners long dead must yet bear the shame of their sins. “At that time” points back to “days come” in vii. 32. The Masoretes wished to have the ׀ before ׀ִ׀ִ׀ deleted, apparently because they took it for ׀ consec. But it here stands before the jussive, as it does frequently, e.g. xiii. 10, Ex. xii. 3. They will take the bones of the kings, princes, priests, and prophets, the rulers and leaders of the people (cf. ii. 26), and the bones of the other inhabitants of Jerusalem, out of their graves, and spread them out before the sun, the moon, and the stars, i.e. expose them under the open sky to the influence of the heavenly bodies, so that they shall rot away, become “dung on the face of the earth.” The worst dishonour that could be done to the dead, a just return in kind for their worship of sun, moon, and stars: cf. vii. 18; 2 Kings xxi. 5, xxiii. 11. This worship the prophet describes in its various stages: “Inclination of the heart, the act of devoting and dedicating themselves to the service, the frequenting of the gods’ sanctuary in order to worship and to obtain oracles; while he strives to bring out in strong relief the contrast between the zeal of their service and the reward they get by it” (Hitz.). They shall not be gathered, i.e. for burial: cf. 2 Sam. xxi. 13 f.; 1 Sam. xxxi. 13. The dead shall suffer this at the hands of enemies despoiling the land. The reason for so doing was, as Jerome observes, the practice of burying ornaments and articles of value along with the dead. Seeking for such things, enemies will turn up the graves (cf. acts of this kind in the case of Ibn Chaldun, in Sylv. de Sacy, *Abdollar*. p. 561), and, in

their hatred and insolence, scatter the bones of the dead all about.—Ver. 3. Not less dreadful will be the fate of those who remain in life; so appalling that they will prefer death to life, since every kind of hardship in exile and imprisonment amongst the heathen is awaiting them: cf. Lev. xxvi. 36-39, Dent. xxviii. 65-67. **הַמְקֻמֹּת הַנִּשְׁאָרִים** strikes us as peculiar, seeing that the latter word cannot be adjective to the former; for “in all the remaining places of Judah” (Umbr.) gives no suitable sense, and “in all remaining places outside of Judah” is contrary to usage. But **הַנִּשְׁאָרִים** may be taken as genitive, in spite of the article prefixed to the *stat. constr.* **הַמְקֻמֹּת**; and we may then translate, with Maur.: in all the places of those who remain whither I have driven them. The LXX. have omitted the second word; and it is possible it may have found its way hither from the preceding line by an error of transcription. And so Hitz., Ew., and Graf have deleted it as a gloss; but the arguments adduced have little weight. The LXX. have also omitted “and say to them,” ver. 4, have changed **כֹּה** into **כִּי**, and generally have treated Jeremiah in a quite uncritical fashion: so that they may have omitted the word from the present verse because it seemed awkward to them, and was not found in the parallel passages, xxix. 14, xxiii. 3, which are not, however, precisely similar to the present verse.

Chap. viii. 4-23. **THE PEOPLE'S OBSTINACY IN WICKEDNESS, AND THE DREADFULNESS OF THE JUDGMENT.**—Since the people cleaves stedfastly to its sin (vers. 4-13), the Lord must punish sorely (vers. 14-23).—Vers. 4-13. “And say to them, Thus hath the Lord said: Doth one fall, and not rise again? or doth one turn away, and not turn back again? Ver. 5. Why doth this people of Jerusalem turn itself away with a perpetual turning? They hold fast by deceit, they refuse to return. Ver. 6. I listened and heard; they speak not aright; no one repenteth him of his wickedness, saying, What have I done? They all turn to their course again, like a horse rushing into the battle. Ver. 7. Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and turtle-dove, and swallow, and crane, keep the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of Jahveh. Ver. 8. How can

ye say, Wise are we, and the law of Jahveh we have? Certainly the lying pen of the scribes hath made it a lie. Ver. 9. Ashamed the wise men become, confounded and taken; lo, the word of Jahveh they spurn at; and whose wisdom have they? Ver. 10. Therefore will I give their wives unto others, their fields to new heirs: for from the small to the great, they are all greedy for gain; from the prophet even unto the priest, they all use deceit. Ver. 11. And they heal the hurt of the daughter of my people as it were a light matter, saying, Peace, peace; and yet there is no peace. Ver. 12. They have been put to shame because they have done abomination; yet they take not shame to themselves, ashamedness they know not. Therefore they shall fall amongst them that fall: in the time of their visitation they shall stumble, hath Jahveh said. Ver. 13. Away, away will I sweep them, saith Jahveh: no grapes on the vine, and no figs on the fig-tree, and the leaf is withered; so I appoint unto them those that shall pass over them."

This strophe connects itself with what precedes. A judgment, dreadful as has been described in vii. 32–viii. 3, will come on Judah, because the people cleaves stiffneckedly to its sins. The וְאַמְרָתָא of ver. 4 corresponds to that in vii. 28. The questioning clauses in ver. 4 contain universal truths, which are applied to the people of Judah in ver. 5. The subjects to יִפְּלוּ and יִשׁוּב are indefinite, hence singular and plural with like significance: cf. Gesen. § 137, 3; Ew. § 294, b. The verb יִשׁוּב, turn oneself, turn about, is here used in a double sense: first, as turn away from one; and then turn towards him, return again. In the application in ver. 5, the Piel is used for to turn away from, and strengthened by: with perpetual turning away or backsliding. נִצַּחַת is not *partic. Niph. fem.* from נִצַּח, but an adjectival formation, continual, enduring, from נִצַּח, continuance, durableness. "Jerusalem" belongs to "this people:" this people of Jerusalem; the close grammatical connection by means of the *stat. constr.* not being maintained, if the first idea gives a sense intelligible by itself, so that the second noun may then be looked on rather in the light of an apposition conveying additional information; cf. Ew. § 290, c. תִּרְמִית, equivalent to מִרְמָה, deceit against God. They refuse to return. Sense: they will not receive the truth, repent and

return to God. The same idea is developed in ver. 6. The first person : I have listened and heard, Hitz. insists, refers to the prophet, "who is justified as to all he said in ver. 5 by what he has seen." But we cannot account that even an "apt" view of the case, which makes the prophet cite his own observations to show that God had not spoken without cause. It is Jahveh that speaks in ver. 5 ; and seeing that ver. 6 gives not the slightest hint of any change in the speaker, we are bound to take ver. 6 also as spoken by God. Thus, to prove that they cleave unto deceit, Jahveh says that He has given heed to their deeds and habits, and heard how they speak the לֹא־כֵן, the not right, *i.e.* lies and deceit. The next clause : not one repents him of his wickedness, corresponds to : they refuse to return ; cf. ver. 5 (נָחַם is *partic.*). Instead of this, the whole of it, *i.e.* all of them, turn again to their course. שׁוּב with כִּי, construed as in Hos. xii. 7 : turn oneself to a thing, so as to enter into it. For מְרֻצָּה, the sig. course is certified to by 2 Sam. xviii. 27. The *Chet.* מְרֻצָּתָם is doubtless merely an error of transcription for מְרֻצָּתָם, as is demanded by the *Keri*. Turn again into their course. The thought is : instead of considering, of becoming repentant, they continue their evil courses. This, too, is substantially what Hitz. gives. Ros., Graf, and others, again, take this in the sense of turning themselves away in their course ; but it is not fair to deduce this sense for שׁוּב without מִן from ver. 4 ; nor is the addition of "from me" justifiable. Besides, this explanation does not suit the following comparison with the horse. It is against analogy to derive מְרֻצָּתָם from רָצָה with the sig. desire, cupidity. Ew., following the *Chald.*, adopts this sense both here and in xxii. 17 and xxiii. 10, though it is not called for in any of these passages, and is unsuitable in xxii. 17. As a horse rusheth into the battle. שָׁפַף, pour forth, overflow, hence rush on impetuously ; by Jerome rightly translated, *cum impetu vadens*. Several commentators compare the Latin *se effundere* (Cæs. Bell. Gall. v. 19) and *effundi* (Liv. xxviii. 7) ; but the cases are not quite in point, since in both the words are used of the cavalry, and not of the steed by itself. This simile makes way for more in ver. 7. Even the fowls under the heaven keep the time of their coming and departure, but Israel takes no concern for the

judgment of its God; cf. Isa. i. 3. הַסִּירָה, (*avis*) *pia*, is the stork, not the heron; see on Lev. xi. 19. "In the heaven" refers to the flight of the stork. All the birds mentioned here are birds of passage. תּוֹר and כּוֹס are turtle-dove and pigeon. For כּוֹס the Masoretes read סִים, apparently to distinguish the word from that for horse; and so the oriental *Codd.* propose to read in Isa. xxxviii. 14, although they wrote כּוֹס. עֲנֹנִי is the crane (acc. to Saad. and Rashi), both here and in Isa. xxxviii. 14, where Gesen., Knob., and others, mistaking the asyndeton, take it as an adjective in the sig. sighing.¹ מוֹעֲדִים are the fixed times for the arrival and departure of the birds of passage.—Ver. 8. In spite of this heedlessness of the statutes, the judgment of God, they vainly boast in their knowledge and possession of God's law. Those who said, We are wise, are mainly the priests and false prophets; cf. ver. 10, ii. 8, v. 31. The wisdom these people claimed for themselves is, as the following clause shows, the knowledge of the law. They prided themselves on possessing the law, from which they conceived themselves to have drawn their wisdom. The second clause, as Hitz. observed, shows that it is the written law that is meant. The law is with us. This is not to be understood merely of the outward possession of it, but the inward, appropriated knowledge, the mastery of the law. The law of Jahveh, recorded in the Pentateuch, teaches not only the bearing towards God due by man, but the bearing of God towards His people. The knowledge of this law begets the wisdom for ruling one's life, tells

¹ Starting from this unproved interpretation of Isa. xxxviii. 14, and supporting their case from the LXX. translation of the present passage, τρυγῶν καὶ χειλιδῶν ἀγροῦ στρουθία, Hitz. and Graf argue that עֲנֹנִי is not the name of any particular bird, but only a qualifying word to כּוֹס, in order to distinguish the swallow from the horse, the sense more commonly attached to the same word. But that confused text of the LXX. by no means justifies us in supposing that the ἡ cop. was introduced subsequently into the Heb. text. It is possible that ἀγροῦ is only a corrupt representation of עֲנֹנִי, and that στρουθία came into the LXX. text in consequence of this corruption. But certainly the fact that the LXX., as also Aquil. and Symm., both here and in Isa. xxxviii. 14, did not know what to make of the Hebrew word, and so transcribed it in Greek letters, leads us to conclude that these translators permitted themselves to be guided by Isa. xxxviii., and omitted here also the copula, which was there omitted before עֲנֹנִי.

how God is to be worshipped, how His favour is to be procured and His anger appeased.

As against all this, Jeremiah declares : Assuredly the lying pen (style) of the scribes hath made it a lie. Ew., Hitz., Graf, translate סופרים, authors, writers ; and the two latter of them take עֲשָׂה = labour : "for a lie (or for deception) hath the lying style (pen) of the writers laboured." This transl. is feasible ; but it seems simpler to supply "תּוֹרַת : hath made it (the law) ; and there is no good reason for confining סוֹפֵר to the original composers of works. The words are not to be limited in their reference to the efforts of the false prophets, who spread their delusive prophecies by means of writings : they refer equally to the work of the priests, whose duty it was to train the people in the law, and who, by false teaching as to its demands, led the people astray, seduced them from the way of truth, and deceived them as to the future. The labours both of the false prophets and of the wicked priests consisted not merely in authorship, in composing and circulating writings, but to a very great extent in the oral teaching of the people, partly by prophetic announcements, partly by instruction in the law ; only in so far as it was necessary was it their duty to set down in writing and circulate their prophecies and interpretations of the law. But this work by word and writing was founded on the existing written law, the Torah of Moses ; just as the true prophets sought to influence the people chiefly by preaching the law to them, by examining their deeds and habits by the rule of the divine will as revealed in the Torah, and by applying to their times the law's promises and threatenings. For this work with the law, and application of it to life, Jer. uses the expression "style of the Shoferim," because the interpretation of the law, if it was to have valid authority as the rule of life, must be fixed by writing. Yet he did not in this speak only of authors, composers, but meant such as busied themselves about the book of the law, made it the object of their study. But inasmuch as such persons, by false interpretation and application, perverted the truth of the law into a lie, he calls their work the work of the lying style (pen).—Ver. 9. Those who held themselves wise will come to shame, will be dismally disabused of their hopes. When the great calamity

comes on the sin-hardened people, they shall be confounded and overwhelmed in ruin (cf. vi. 11). They spurn at the word of Jahveh; whose wisdom then have they? None; for the word of the Lord alone is Israel's wisdom and understanding, Deut. iv. 6.

The threatening in ver. 10 includes not only the wise ones, but the whole people. "Therefore" attaches to the central truth of vers. 5 and 6, which has been elucidated in vers. 7-9. The first half of ver. 10 corresponds, in shorter compass, to what has been said in vi. 12, and is here continued in vers. 10b-12 in the same words as in vi. 13-15. יֹרְשִׁים are those who take possession, make themselves masters of a thing, as in xlix. 2 and Mic. i. 15. This repetition of the three verses is not given in the LXX., and Hitz. therefore proposes to delete them as a supplementary interpolation, holding that they are not only superfluous, but that they interrupt the sense. For he thinks ver. 13 connects remarkably well with ver. 10a, but, taken out of its connection with what precedes as we have it, begins baldly enough. To this Graf has made fitting answer: This passage is in no respect more superfluous or awkward than vi. 13ff.; nor is the connection of ver. 13 with ver. 10a at all closer than with ver. 12. And Hitz., in order to defend the immediate connection between ver. 13 and ver. 10, sees himself compelled, for the restoration of equilibrium, to delete the middle part of ver. 13 (from "no grapes" to "withered") as spurious; for which proceeding there is not the smallest reason, since this passage has neither the character of an explanatory gloss, nor is it a repetition from any place whatever, nor is it wanting in the LXX. Just as little ground is there to argue against the genuineness of the two passages from the variations found in them. Here in ver. 10 we have מְקַטְנֵי יַעַר-אֲדוּלָם instead of the מְקַטְנֵם יַעַר-אֲדוּלָם of vi. 13; but the suffix, which in the latter case pointed to the preceding "inhabitants of the land," was unnecessary here, where there is no such reference. In like manner, the forms הַבָּלִים for הַבָּלִים, and עַת פָּאֲרָתָם for עַת-פָּאֲרָתֵי, are but the more usual forms used by Jeremiah elsewhere. So the omission of the ם in יִרְבּוּ for יִרְבּוּ, as coming either from the writer or the copyist, clearly does not make against the genuineness of the verses. And there is the less

reason for making any difficulty about the passage, seeing that such repetitions are amongst the peculiarities of Jeremiah's style : cf. *e.g.* vii. 31-33 with xix. 5-7; x. 12-16 with li. 15-19; xv. 13, 14, with xvii. 3, 4; xvi. 14, 15, with xxiii. 7, 8; xxiii. 5, 6, with xxxiii. 15, 16; xxiii. 19, 20, with xxx. 23, 24, and other shorter repetitions.—Ver. 13. The warning of coming punishment, reiterated from a former discourse, is strengthened by the threatening that God will sweep them utterly away, because Judah has become an unfruitful vine and fig-tree. In **אֶסְפֹּף אֶסְפֹּף אֶסְפֹּף** we have a combination of **אֶסְפֹּף**, gather, glean, carry away, and **אֶסְפֹּף**, Hiph. of **אֶסְפֹּף**, make an end, sweep off, so as to heighten the sense, as in Zeph. i. 2 f.,—a passage which was doubtless in the prophet's mind : wholly will I sweep them away. The circumstantial clauses : no grapes—and the leaves are withered, show the cause of the threatening : The people is become an unfruitful vine and fig-tree, whose leaves are withered. Israel was a vineyard the Lord had planted with noble vines, but which brought forth sour grapes, ii. 21, Isa. v. 2. In keeping with this figure, Israel is thought of as a vine on which are no grapes. With this is joined the like figure of a fig-tree, to which Micah in vii. 1 makes allusion, and which is applied by Christ to the degenerate race of His own time in His symbolical act of cursing the fig-tree (Matt. xxi. 19). To exhaust the thought that Judah is ripe for judgment, it is further added that the leaves are withered. The tree whose leaves are withered, is near being parched throughout. Such a tree was the people of Judah, fallen away from its God, spurning at the law of the Lord; in contrast with which, the man who trusts in the Lord, and has delight in the law of the Lord, is like the tree planted by the water, whose leaves are ever green, and which bringeth forth fruit in his season, xvii. 8, Ps. i. 1-3. Ros. and Mov. are quite wrong in following the Chald., and in taking the circumstantial clauses as a description of the future; Mov. even proceeds to change **אֶסְפֹּף אֶסְפֹּף אֶסְפֹּף** into **אֶסְפֹּף אֶסְפֹּף**. The interpretation of the last clause is a disputed point. Ew., following the old translators (Chald., Syr., Aq., Symm., Vulg.; in the LXX. they are omitted), understands the words of the transgression of the commands of God, which they seem to have received only in order to break them. **אֶסְפֹּף**

seems to tell in favour of this, and it may be taken as *præter.* with the translation: and I gave to them that which they transgress. But unless we are to admit that the idea thus obtained stands quite abruptly, we must follow the Chald., and take it as the reason of what precedes: They are become an unfruitful tree with faded leaves, because they have transgressed my law which I gave them. But יִצְחָק with יִּ consec. goes directly against this construction. Of less weight is the other objection against this view, that the plural suffix in יִצְחָקִים has no suitable antecedent; for there could be no difficulty in supplying "judgments" (cf. ver. 8). But the abrupt appearance of the thought, wholly unlooked for here, is sufficient to exclude that interpretation. We therefore prefer the other interpretation, given with various modifications by Ven., Ros., and Maur., and translate: so I appoint unto them those that shall pass over them. The *imperf. c.* יִּ consec. attaches itself to the circumstantial clauses, and introduces the resulting consequence; it is therefore to be expressed in English by the present, not by the *præter.*: therefore I gave them (Näg.). יִצְחָק in the general sig. appoint, and the second verb with the *pron. rel.* omitted: *illos qui eos invadent.* יִצְחָק, to overrun a country or people, of a hostile army swarming over it, as *e.g.* Isa. viii. 8, xxviii. 15. For the construction *c. accus.* cf. Jer. xxiii. 9, v. 22. Hitz.'s and Graf's mode of construction is forced: I deliver them up to them (to those) who pass over them; for then we must not only supply an object to יִצְחָק, but adopt the unusual arrangement by which the pronoun לָהֶם is made to stand before the words that explain it.

Vers. 14–23. *The horrors of the approaching visitation.*—Ver. 14. "Why do we sit still? Assemble yourselves, and let us go into the defenced cities, and perish there; for Jahveh our God hath decreed our ruin, and given us water of gall to drink, because we have sinned against Jahveh. Ver. 15. We looked for safety, and there is no good; for a time of healing, and behold terrors. Ver. 16. From Dan is heard the snorting of his horses; at the loud neighing of his steeds the whole earth trembles: they come, and devour the land and its fulness, the city and those that dwell therein. Ver. 17. For, behold, I send among you serpents, vipers, of which there is no charming,

which shall sting you, saith Jahveh. Ver. 18. Oh my comfort in sorrow, in me my heart grows too sick. Ver. 19. Behold, loud sounds the cry of the daughter from out of a far country : 'Is Jahveh not in Zion, nor her King in her?' Why provoked they me with their images, with vanities of a foreign land? Ver. 20. Past is the harvest, ended is the fruit-gathering, and we are not saved. Ver. 21. For the breaking of the daughter of my people am I broken, am in mourning; horror hath taken hold on me. Ver. 22. Is there no balm in Gilead, or no physician there? why then is no plaster laid upon the daughter of my people? Ver. 23. Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears! then would I weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people."

In spirit the prophet sees the enemy forcing his way into the country, and the inhabitants fleeing into the fortified cities. This he represents to his hearers with graphic and dramatic effect. In ver. 14 the citizens of Judah are made to speak, calling on one another to flee and give up hope of being saved. "Why do we sit still?" *i.e.* remain calmly where we are? We will withdraw into the strong cities (cf. iv. 5), and perish there by famine and disease (נִדְמָה for נִדְמָה, imperf. Niph., from דָּמָם: cf. Gesen. § 67, 5, Rem. 11; in Niph. be destroyed, perish). The fortresses cannot save them from ruin, since they will be besieged and taken by the enemy. For our sin against Him, God has decreed our ruin. The Hiph. from דָּמָם, prop. put to silence, bring to ruin, here with the force of a decree. מֵי רָאשׁ, bitter waters; רָאשׁ or רֹאשׁ, Deut. xxxii. 32, is a plant with a very bitter taste, and so, since bitterness and poison were to the Jews closely connected, a poisonous plant; see on Deut. xxix. 17. So they call the bitter suffering from the ruin at hand which they must undergo. Cf. the similar figure of the cup of the anger of Jahveh, ch. xxv. 15 ff.—Ver. 15. Instead of peace and safety hoped for, there is calamity and terror. The infin. abs. נִדְמָה is used emphatically for the imperf.: We looked for safety, and no good has come to us: for healing, *sc.* of our injuries, and instead comes terror, by reason of the appearance of the foe in the land. This hope has been awakened and cherished in the people by false prophets (see on iv. 10), and now, to their sore suffering, they must feel the

contrary of it. The same idea is repeated in xiv. 19. מִרְפָּה is a mis-spelling of מִרְיָם, xiv. 19, etc.—Ver. 16. From the northern borders of Canaan (from Dan; see on iv. 15) is already heard the dreadful tumult of the advancing enemy, the snorting of his horses. The suffix in סוֹצִי refers to the enemy, whose invasion is threatened in vi. 22, and is here presumed as known. אֲבִירָיו, his strong ones, here, as in xlvii. 3, l. 11, a poetical name for strong horses, stallions; elsewhere for strong animals, *e.g.* Ps. xxii. 13, l. 13. The whole earth, not the whole land. With “devour the land,” cf. v. 17. עִיר and אֶרֶץ have an indefinite comprehensive force; town and country on which the enemy is marching.—Ver. 17. The terribleness of these enemies is heightened by a new figure. They are compared to snakes of the most venomous description, which cannot be made innocuous by any charming, whose sting is fatal. “Vipers” is in apposition to “serpents;” serpents, namely basilisks. צִפְעִי is, acc. to Aqu. and Vulg. on Isa. xi. 8, *serpens regulus*, the basilisk, a small and very venomous species of viper, of which there is no charming. Cf. for the figure, Cant. x. 11; and for the enemies’ cruelty thereby expressed, cf. vi. 23, Isa. xiii. 18.

The hopeless ruin of his people cuts the prophet to the very heart. In vers. 18–23 his sore oppressed heart finds itself vent in bitter lamentations. Oh my comfort in sorrow! is the cry of sore affliction. This may be seen from the second half of the verse, the sense of which is clear: sick (faint) is my heart upon me. עָלַי shows that the sickness of heart is a sore burden on him, crushes him down; cf. Ew. § 217, i. “My comfort” is accordingly vocative: Oh my comfort concerning the sorrow! Usually הֵן מִי is supplied: Oh that I had, that there were for me comfort! The sense suits, but the ellipse is without parallel. It is simpler to take the words as an exclamation: the special force of it, that he knows not when to seek comfort, may be gathered from the context. For other far-fetched explanations, see in Ros. *ad h. l.* The grief which cuts so deeply into his heart that he sighs for relief, is caused by his already hearing in spirit the mourning cry of his people as they go away into captivity.—Ver. 19. From a far country he hears the people complain: Is Jahveh not in Zion? is He no longer the King of His people there? The suffix in מִלְכָּה refers to

“daughter of my people,” and the King is Jahveh; cf. Isa. xxxiii. 22. They ask whether Jahveh is no longer King in Zion, that He may release His people from captivity and bring them back to Zion. To this the voice of God replies with the counter-question: Why have they provoked me with their idolatry, *sc.* so that I had to give them over into the power of the heathen for punishment? “Images” is expounded by the apposition: vanities (no-gods; for הַבָּל, see on ii. 5) of a foreign land. Because they have chosen the empty idols from abroad (xiv. 22) as their gods, Jahveh, the almighty God of Zion, has cast them out into a far country amidst strange people. The people goes on to complain in ver. 20: Past is the harvest . . . and we are not saved. As Schnur. remarked, these words have something of the proverb about them. As a countryman, hoping for a good harvest, falls into despair as to his chances, so the people have been in vain looking for its rescue and deliverance. The events, or combinations of events, to which it looked for its rescue are gone by without bringing any such result. Many ancient commentators, following Rashi, have given too special a significance to this verse in applying it to the assistance expected from Egypt in the time of Jehoiakim or Zedekiah. Hitz. is yet more mistaken when he takes the saying to refer to an unproductive harvest. From ver. 19 we see that the words are spoken by the people while it pines in exile, which sets its hopes of being saved not in the productiveness of the harvest, but in a happy turn of the political situation.—Ver. 21. The hopeless case of the people and kingdom moves the seer so deeply, that he bursts forth with the cry: For the breaking of my people I am broken (the Hoph. הִשְׁבִּירָתִי, of the breaking of the heart, only here; in this sig. usu. the Niph., *e.g.* xxiii. 9, Ps. lxix. 21). קָרַךְ, to be black, used of wearing mourning, in other words, to be in mourning; cf. Ps. xxxv. 14, xxxviii. 7. Horror hath taken hold on me, is stronger than: Anguish hath taken hold on me, vi. 24, Mic. iv. 9. Help is nowhere to be found. This thought is in ver. 22 clothed in the question: Is there no balm in Gilead, or no physician there? “There” points back to Gilead. Graf’s remark, that “it is not known that the physicians were got from that quarter,” shows nothing more than that its author has

mistaken the figurative force of the words. בָּשֶׁלֶם, balsam, is mentioned in Gen. xxxvii. 25 as an article of commerce carried by Midianite merchants to Egypt (cf. Ezek. xxvii. 17), but is hardly the real balsam from Mecca (*amyris opobalsamum*), which during the Roman sovereignty was grown under culture in the gardens of Jericho, and which only succeeds in a climate little short of tropical. It was more likely the *resina* of the ancients, a gum procured from the terebinth or mastic tree (*lentiscus*, σχιῖνος), which, acc. to Plin. *h. nat.* xxiv. 22, was held in esteem as a medicament for wounds (*resolvitur resina ad vulnerum usus et malagmata oleo*). Acc. to our passage and xlv. 11, cf. Gen. xxxvii. 25, it was procured chiefly from Gilead; cf. Movers, *Phöniz.* ii. 3, S. 220 ff., and the remarks on Gen. xxxvii. 25. To these questions a negative answer is given. From this we explain the introduction of a further question with וְיָ: if there were balm in Gilead, and a physician there, then a plaister would have been laid on the daughter of my people, which is not the case. As to עֲלֶתָהּ אֶרְבָּה, lit. a plaister comes upon, see on xxx. 17. The calamity is so dreadful, that the prophet could weep about it day and night. To express the extremity of his grief, he wishes that his head were water, *i.e.* might be dissolved into water, and that his eye might become an inexhaustible fountain of tears. כִּי יִתֵּן, who might give, make my head water, *i.e.* would that it were water!

Chap. ix. 1–21. LAMENT FOR THE FAITHLESSNESS AND FOLLY OF THE PEOPLE, INFATUATED REGARDING THEIR SIN.—Upon the lament for the ruin of the kingdom, follows in vers. 1–8 the lament for the wickedness which rendered judgment necessary, which is further gone into in vers. 9–21.

Vers. 1–8. “Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging-place of wayfarers! then would I leave my people, and go away from them. For they be all adulterers, a crew of faithless ones. Ver. 2. They bend their tongue like their bow with lying; and not according to faithfulness do they manage in the land, but go on from evil to evil, and me they know not, saith Jahveh. Ver. 3. Beware each of his neighbour, and trust not in any brother; for every brother supplanteth, and every friend goeth slandering. Ver. 4. And one overreacheth the other, and truth they speak

not; they teach their tongue to speak lies, to deal perversely they weary themselves. Ver. 5. Thy dwelling is in the midst of deceit; in deceit they refuse to know me, saith Jahveh. Ver. 6. Therefore thus hath spoken Jahveh of hosts: Behold, I will melt them, and try them; for how should I deal in regard to the daughter of my people? Ver. 7. A deadly arrow is their tongue; they speak deceit; with his mouth one speaketh peace with his neighbour, and inwardly within him he layeth ambush. Ver. 8. Shall I not visit this upon them? saith Jahveh; or on such a people as this shall not my soul take vengeance?"

Jeremiah would flee into the wilderness, far away from his people; because amidst such a corrupt, false, and cunning people, life had become unbearable, ver. 1. *מִי יִתֶּנִּי*, as in Isa. xxvii. 4, equivalent to *מִי יִתֶּן לִי*, Ps. lv. 7: who would give me = Oh that I had! The "lodging-place" is not a resting-place under the open sky, but a harbour for travellers,—a building (khan) erected on the route of the caravans, as a shelter for travellers. Adultery and faithlessness are mentioned as cardinal sins. The first sin has been rebuked in v. 7, the second is exposed in vers. 2-4. *בֹּוֹגֵר*, faithless either towards God or one's fellow-men; here in the latter sense. The account of the unfaithful conduct is introduced in ver. 2 by the imperf. with *י* consec., and is carried on in the perf. Manifestations of sin are the issue of a sinful state of heart; the perfects are used to suggest the particular sins as accomplished facts. In the clause, "they bend," etc., *שָׁקַר* is the second object; and "their bow" is in apposition to "their tongue:" they bend their tongue, which is their bow, with lying. For this construction the Hiph. is the proper form, and this is not to be changed into the Kal (as by Hitz., Gr., Näg.). In Job xxviii. 8 the Hiph. is used instead of the Kal in the sense of tread upon, walk upon; here it is used of the treading of the bow to bend it, and lying is looked upon as the arrow with which the bow is stretched or armed for shooting. If the verb be changed into the Kal, we must join *שָׁקַר* with *קִשְׁתָּם*: their lying-bow. For this connection *וַיִּרְכֹּב וַיִּשֶׁה*, Ezek. xvi. 27, may be cited; but it gives us the unnatural figure: their tongue as a bow, which is lying. It is neither the tongue nor the bow which is lying, but that which they shoot with their tongue as with a bow. According to faithfulness; *לֵךְ* of the rule,

norm, as in v. 3. Not faithfulness to their convictions (Hitz.), but in their behaviour towards their fellow-men. נָכַר, be strong, exercise strength, rule, and manage. The prophet has in view the great and mighty who had power in their hands, and who mis-used it to oppress their inferiors. From evil to evil they go on, *i.e.* they proceed from one sin to another; but God the Lord they know not, *i.e.* are determined to know nothing of Him; cf. 1 Sam. ii. 12, Job xviii. 21. Hence each must keep himself on his guard against the other. To express this in the most emphatic manner, Jeremiah gives it the form of a command: Beware each of his neighbour, trust not in a brother; for each seeks to overreach and trip up the other. In the words יַעֲקֹב יַעֲקֹב there seems to be an allusion to Jacob's underhand dealing with his brother Esau, Gen. xxvii. 36. On "goes slandering," cf. vi. 28, and cf. also the similar description in Mic. vii. 5, 6. In ver. 4 these sinful ways are exposed in yet stronger words. יִהְיֶה, uncontracted form of the imperf. Hiph. of הָלַל, trip up, deceive. On the infin. הָעֵתָה, cf. *Ew.* § 238, *e*, and *Gesen.* § 75, Rem. 17. They weary themselves out, put themselves to great labour, in order to deal corruptly; יִלָּא as in xx. 9, Isa. xvi. 12, elsewhere to be weary of a thing; cf. vi. 11, xv. 6.—In ver. 5 the statement returns to the point at which it commenced: thy sitting (dwelling) is in the midst of deceit. In deceit, *i.e.* in the state of their mind, directed as it is by deceit and cheating, they refuse to know me, *i.e.* they are resolved to have nothing to do with the knowledge of God, because in that case they must give up their godless ways.¹ By reason of this depravity, the Lord must purge His people by sore judgments.

¹ The LXX. have not understood יִשְׁכַּח. They have split it up into יָשַׁב, joined to שָׁכַח, and translated, after adding ἄλῃ: καὶ οὐ διέλιπον τοῦ ἐπιστρέψαι. τόκος ἐπὶ τόκῳ (*i.e.* usury upon usury) καὶ δόλος ἐπὶ δόλῳ. οὐκ ἠθέλον εἰδέναι με. *Ew.* has adopted this construction, and so translates: "have accustomed their tongue to speak lies, to do perversity, are weary of turning again; wrong upon wrong, deceit upon deceit, they are not willing to know me." But this text is not better, but worse, than the Masoretic: for, 1st, the perverse dealing or action is attributed to the tongue; 2d, the thought, they are weary of turning again, does not suit the context, since the persons described here have never sought to return or repent, and so cannot have become weary of it. For these reasons, neither Hitz. nor Graf has given countenance to the LXX. text.

He will melt it in the fire of affliction (Isa. xlviii. 10), to separate the wicked : cf. Isa. i. 25, Zech. xiii. 9 ; and on בָּחַץ, Jer. vi. 27. For how should I do, deal? Not : what dreadful judgments shall I inflict (Hitz., Gr.), in which case the grounding יִ would not have its proper force ; but : I can do none otherwise than purge. Before the face of, *i.e.* by reason of, the daughter, because the daughter of my people behaves herself as has been described in vers. 2-4, and as is yet to be briefly repeated in ver. 7. The LXX. have paraphrased מִפְּנֵי: ἀπὸ προσώπου πονηρίας. This is true to the sense, but it is unfair to argue from it, as Ew., Hitz., Gr. do, that רָעַת has been dropped out of the Hebrew text and should be restored.—In ver. 7 what has been said is recapitulated shortly, and then in ver. 8 the necessity of the judgment is shown. חָץ שְׂחֹט, a slaying, slaughtering, *i.e.* murderous arrow. Instead of this *Chet.*, which gives a good sense, the *Keri* gives שְׂחֹט, which, judging from the Chald. translation, is probably to be translated sharpened. But there is no evidence for this sig., since שְׂחֹט occurs only in connection with זָהָב, 1 Kings x. 16, and means beaten, lit. spread gold. At מְרִמָּה רִבִּיר the plural passes into the singular : he (one of them) speaks ; cf. Ps. lv. 22. אָרָב for insidious scheming, as in Hos. vii. 6. With ver. 8 cf. v. 9, 29.

Vers. 9-15. *The land laid waste, and the people scattered amongst the heathen.*—Ver. 9. “For the mountains I take up a weeping and wailing, and for the pastures of the wilderness a lament ; for they are burnt up so that no man passeth over them, neither hear they the voice of the flock ; the fowls of the heavens and the cattle are fled, are gone. Ver. 10. And I make Jerusalem heaps, a dwelling of jackals ; and the cities of Judah I make a desolation, without an inhabitant. Ver. 11. Who is the wise man, that he may understand this ? and to whom the mouth of Jahveh hath spoken, that he may declare it ? Wherefore doth the land come to ruin, is it burnt up like the wilderness, that none passeth through ? Ver. 12. Jahveh said : Because they forsake my law which I set before them, and have not hearkened unto my voice, neither walked therein, Ver. 13. But went after the stubbornness of their heart, and after the Baals, which their fathers have taught them. Ver. 14. Therefore thus hath Jahveh of hosts spoken,

the God of Israel: Behold, I feed this people with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink, Ver. 15. And scatter them among the nations which they knew not, neither they nor their fathers, and send the sword after them, until I have consumed them."

Already in spirit Jeremiah sees God's visitation come upon the land, and in vers. 9 and 10 he raises a bitter lamentation for the desolation of the country. The mountains and meadows of the steppes or prairies are made so desolate, that neither men nor beasts are to be found there. Mountains and meadows or pastures of the steppes, as contrasted with the cities (ver. 10), represent the remoter parts of the country. *עַל* is here not local: *upon*, but causal, *concerning* = because of, cf. iv. 24 ff., as is usual with *נָשָׂא נְהִי (קִינָה)*; cf. 2 Sam. i. 17, Amos v. 1, Ezek. xxvi. 17, etc. *נִצְתָּה*, kindled, burnt up, usually of cities (cf. ii. 15), here of a tract of country with the sig. be parched by the glowing heat of the sun, as a result of the interruption of agriculture. *מִדְבָּר* is steppe, prairie, not suitable for tillage, but well fitted for pasturing cattle, as *e.g.* the wilderness of Judah; cf. 1 Sam. xvii. 28. With *מִבְּלִי עֶבֶר*, ver. 11, cf. Ezek. xxxiii. 28. Not only have the herds disappeared that used to feed there, but the very birds have flown away, because the parched land no longer furnishes food for them; cf. iv. 25. To "are fled," which is used most properly of birds, is added: are gone away, departed, in reference to the cattle.—Ver. 10. Jerusalem is to become stone-heaps, where only jackals dwell. *אֲיִים* is jackals (*canis aureus*), in Isa. xiii. 22 called *אֲיִים* from their cry; see on Isa. *l.c.*, and Gesen. *thes. s.v.* *מִבְּלִי יֹשֵׁב* as in ii. 15, iv. 7.—That such a judgment will pass over Judah every wise man must see well, and every one enlightened by God is to declare it; for universal apostasy from God and His law cannot but bring down punishment. But such wisdom and such spiritual enlightenment is not found in the infatuated people. This is the idea of vers. 11–13. The question: Who is the wise man? etc., reminds us of Hos. xiv. 10, and is used with a negative force: unhappily there is none so wise as to see this. "This" is explained by the clause, Wherefore doth the land, etc.: this, *i.e.* the reason why the land is going to destruction. The second clause, "and to whom," etc., is dependent on the

יְיָ, which is to be repeated in thought : and who is he that, etc. Jeremiah has the false prophets here in view, who, if they were really illumined by God, if they really had the word of God, could not but declare to the people their corruptness, and the consequences which must flow from it. But since none is so wise . . . Jeremiah proposes to them the question in ver. 11b, and in ver. 12 tells the answer as given by God Himself. Because they have forsaken my law, etc. נָתַן לִפְנֵי, to set before ; as in Deut. iv. 8, so here, of the oral inculcation of the law by the prophets. "Walketh therein" refers to the law. The stubbornness of their heart, as in iii. 17, vii. 24. After the Baals, ii. 23. The relative clause, "which their fathers," etc., refers to both clauses of the verse ; אֲשֶׁר with a neuter sense : which their fathers have taught them.—Ver. 14. The description of the offence is again followed by the threatening of judgment. To feed with wormwood and give gall to drink is a figure for sore and bitter suffering at the overthrow of the kingdom and in exile. The meaning of the suffix in מֵאֲבִיָּאֵם is shown by the apposition : this people. On water of gall see viii. 14, and for the use of לָעֵנָה and רָאשׁ together see Deut. xxix. 17.—וְהַפְּצוּתִים וְהַפְּצוּתִים implies a verbal allusion to the words of Deut. xxviii. 64 and 36, cf. Lev. xxvi. 33. With this latter passage the second clause : I send the sword after them, has a close affinity. The purport of it is : I send the sword after the fugitives, to pursue them into foreign lands and slay them ; cf. xlii. 16, xliv. 27. Thus it is indicated that those who fled into Egypt would be reached by the sword there and slain. This does not stand in contradiction to what is said in iv. 27, v. 18, etc., to the effect that God will not make an utter end of them (Graf's opinion). This appears from xliv. 27, where those that flee to Egypt are threatened with destruction by famine and sword עַד בָּלֹותִי אוֹתָם, while ver. 28 continues : but they that have escaped the sword shall return. Hence we see that the terms of the threatening do not imply the extirpation of the people to the last man, but only the extirpation of all the godless, of this wicked people.

Vers. 16-21. *Zion laid waste*.—Ver. 16. "Thus hath Jahveh of hosts said : Give heed and call for mourning women, that they may come, and send to the wise women, that they may

come, Ver. 17. And may make haste and strike up a lamentation for us, that our eyes may run down with tears and our eyelids gush out with water. Ver. 18. For loud lamentation is heard out of Zion: How are we spoiled, sore put to shame! because we have left the land, because they have thrown down our dwellings. Ver. 19. For hear, ye women, the word of Jahveh, and let your ear receive the word of His mouth, and teach your daughters lamentation, and let one teach the other the song of mourning! Ver. 20. For death cometh up by our windows, he entereth into our palaces, to cut off the children from the streets, the young men from the thoroughfares. Ver. 21. Speak: Thus runs the saying of Jahveh: And the carcasses of men shall fall as dung upon the field, and as a sheaf behind the shearer, which none gathereth."

In this strophe we have a further account of the execution of the judgment, and a poetical description of the vast harvest death is to have in Zion. The citizens of Zion are called upon to give heed to the state of affairs now in prospect, *i.e.* the judgment preparing, and are to assemble mourning women that they may strike up a dirge for the dead. הִתְבּוֹנֵן, to be attentive, give heed to a thing; cf. ii. 10. Women cunning in song are to come with speed (תִּמְהִירָה takes the place of an adverb). The form תִּבְּוֹצִינָה (Ps. xlv. 16, 1 Sam. x. 7) alternates with תִּבְּוֹצִינָה, the usual form in this verb, *e.g.* Gen. xxx. 38, 1 Kings iii. 16, etc., in order to produce an alternating form of expression. "For us" Näg. understands of those who call the mourning women, and in it he finds "something unusual," because ordinarily mourners are summoned to lament for those already dead, *i.e.* others than those who summon them. "But here they are to raise their laments for the very persons who summon them, and for the death of these same, which has yet to happen." There is a misunderstanding at the bottom of this remark. The "for us" is not said of the callers; for these are addressed in the second person. If Näg.'s view were right, it must be "for you," not "for us." True, the LXX. has ἐφ' ὑμᾶς; but Hitz. has rejected this reading as a simplification and weakening expression, and as disturbing the plan. "For us" is used by the people taken collectively, the nation as such, which is to be so sorely afflicted and chastised by death

that it is time for the mourning women to raise their dirge, that so the nation may give vent to its grief in tears. We must also take into account, that even although the lamentations were for the dead, they yet chiefly concerned the living, who had been deeply afflicted by the loss of beloved relations; it would not be the dead merely that were mourned for, but the living too, because of their loss. It is this reference that stands here in the foreground, since the purpose of the chanting of dirges is that our eyes may flow with tears, etc. Zion will lament the slain of her people (viii. 23), and so the mourning women are to strike up dirges. *תִּשְׁאֲנָה* for *תִּשְׁנָה*, as in Ruth i. 14; cf. Ew. § 198, *b*. On the use of *יָרַד* and *נָזַל* with the *accus.*: flow down in tears, cf. Gesen. § 138, 1, Rem. 2, Ew. § 281, *b*.—Ver. 18 gives the reason why the mourning women are to be called: Loud lamentation is heard out of Zion. Ew. takes “out of Zion” of the Israelites carried away from their country—a view arbitrary in itself, and incompatible with ver. 20. “How are we spoiled!” cf. iv. 13; brought utterly to shame, because we have left the land, *i.e.* have been forced to leave it, and because they (the enemies) have thrown down our dwellings! *הִשְׁלִיךְ*, cast down, overthrow, Job xviii. 7, cf. Ezek. xix. 12, and of buildings, Dan. viii. 11. Kimchi and Hitz., again, take “our dwellings” as subject: our dwellings have cast us out, and appeal to Lev. xviii. 25: The land vomited out its inhabitants. But the figurative style in this passage does not justify us in adopting so unnatural a figure as this, that the dwellings cast out their occupants. Nor could the object be omitted in such a case. The passages, Isa. xxxiii. 9, Mic. ii. 4, to which Hitz. appeals, are not analogous to the present one. The subject, not expressed, *acc.* to our view of the passage, is readily suggested by the context and the nature of the case. The “for” in ver. 19 gives a second reason for calling the mourning women together. They are to come not only to chant laments for the spoiling of Zion, but that they may train their daughters and other women in the art of dirge-singing, because the number of deaths will be so great that the existing number of mourning women will not be sufficient for the task about to fall on them. This thought is introduced by a command of God, in order to certify that this great

harvest of death will without fail be gathered. **וְאִנְיָנֶם** and **בְּנִיחֶם** have masc. suffixes instead of feminine, the masc. being often thus used as the more general form; cf. Ew. § 184, c. In the last clause the verb "teach" is to be supplied from the preceding context.—Ver. 20. Death comes in through (in at) the windows, not because the doors are to be thought of as barricaded (Hitz.), but as a thief in the night, *i.e.* suddenly, in an unexpected way. Perhaps Jeremiah was here thinking of Joel ii. 9. And comes into the palaces, *i.e.* spares no house, but carries off high and low. The second clause is not to be very closely joined with the first, thus: Death comes into the houses and palaces, to sweep the children from off the streets; this would be self-contradictory. We must rather repeat "comes" from the first clause: He comes to sweep off the streets the child at play. That is: In the houses and palaces, as upon the streets and highways, he will seize his prey.—Ver. 21. The numbers of the dead will be so great, that the bodies will be left lying unburied. The concluding touch to this awful picture is introduced by the formula, "Speak: Thus saith the Lord," as a distinct word from God to banish all doubt of the truth of the statement. This formula is interposed parenthetically, so that the main idea of the clause is joined by **וְ** *cop.* to ver. 20. This **וְ** is not to be deleted as a gloss, as it is by Ew. and others, because it is not found in the LXX. With "as dung," cf. viii. 2, xvi. 4. **וְקִיֹּר**, prop. a bundle of stalks, grasped by the hand and cut, then = **עֵמֶר**, sheaf. As a sheaf behind the reaper, which nobody gathers, *i.e.* which is left to lie unheeded, is not brought by the reaper into the barn. The point of the simile is in the lying unheeded. Strange to say, Graf and Näg. propose to refer the "none gathereth" not to the sheaf of the shearer, but to the dead bodies: whereas the reaper piles the sheaves upon the waggon and brings them to the threshing-floor, the corpses are left ungathered.

Chap. ix. 22–x. 25. THE TRUE WISDOM.—It is not a reliance on one's own wisdom and strength that brings well-being, but the knowledge of the Lord and of His dealings in grace and justice (ix. 22–25). Idolatry is folly, for the idols are the mere work of men's hands; whereas Jahveh, the Almighty God, is

ruler of the world (x. 1-16). Israel will be made to understand this by the coming judgment (vers. 17-25).

Vers. 22-25. *The way of safety*.—Ver. 22. “Thus hath Jahveh said: Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, and let not the strong man glory in his strength; let not the rich man glory in his riches: Ver. 23. But let him that glorieth glory in this, in having understanding, and in knowing me, that I am Jahveh, dealing grace, right, and justice upon earth; for therein have I pleasure, saith Jahveh. Ver. 24. Behold, days come, saith Jahveh, that I punish all the circumcised (who are) with foreskin, Ver. 25. Egypt, and Judah, and Edom, and the sons of Ammon, Moab and them that have their hair-corners polled, that dwell in the wilderness; for all the heathen are uncircumcised, and the whole house of Israel is uncircumcised in heart.”

After having overturned the foundations of the people's false reliance on the temple, or the sacrifices, and in the wisdom of its leaders, Jeremiah finally points out the way that leads to safety. This consists solely in the true knowledge of the Lord who doth grace, right, and justice, and therein hath pleasure. In ver. 23 he mentions the delusive objects of confidence on which the children of this world are wont to pride themselves: their own wisdom, strength, and riches. These things do not save from ruin. Safety is secured only by “having understanding and knowing me.” These two ideas are so closely connected, that the second may be looked on as giving the nearer definition of the first. The having of understanding must manifest itself in the knowing of the Lord. The two verbs are in the *infin. abs.*, because all that was necessary was to suggest the idea expressed by the verb; cf. Ew. § 328, *b*. The knowledge of God consists in knowing Him as Him who doth grace, right, and justice upon earth. חֶסֶד, grace, favour, is the foundation on which right and justice are based; cf. xxxii. 18, Ps. xxxiii. 5, xcix. 4, ciii. 6. He who has attained to this knowledge will seek to practise these virtues towards his fellow-men, because only therein has God pleasure (חֶסֶד pointing back to the objects before mentioned); cf. xxii. 3, Ps. xi. 7, xxxvii. 28. But because the Lord has pleasure in right and justice, He will punish all peoples that do not practise justice.

Thus vers. 24 and 25 are connected with what precedes. The lack of righteousness is indicated by the idea מִלְּבָבָהּ : circumcised with foreskin, *i.e.* not, circumcised in the foreskin (LXX., Vulg.), but circumcised and yet possessed of the foreskin. It is incorrect to translate: circumcised together with the uncircumcised (Kimchi, de W.). This is not only contrary to the usage of the language, but inconsistent with the context, since in ver. 25 uncircumcisedness is predicated of the heathen and of Judah. The expression is an *oxymoron*, thus: uncircumcised-circumcised (Ew.), intended to gather Jews and heathen into one category. This is shown by the order of the enumeration in ver. 24: Egypt, Judah, Edom, etc.; whence we may see that in this reference the prophet puts Judah on the same footing with the heathen, with the Egyptians, Edomites, etc., and so mentions Judah between Egypt and Edom. From the enumeration Ew. and Näg., following the example of Jerome,¹ conclude that all the peoples named along with Judah practised circumcision. But neither on exegetical nor on historical grounds can this be confidently asserted. Considered from the exegetical point of view, it is contradictory of the direct statement in ver. 25, that all the nations are uncircumcised. We must certainly not take the words כָּל-הַגּוֹיִם as: all these peoples, giving the article then the force of a retrospective demonstrative; still less can they mean "all the other nations" besides those named. "All the nations" are all nations besides Israel. When these are called "uncircumcised," and Israel "uncircumcised in heart," it is as clear as can be that all nations, and so Egyptians, Edomites, etc., are called uncircumcised, *i.e.* in the flesh; while Israel—the whole house of Israel, *i.e.* Judah and the other tribes—are set over against the nations in contrast to them as being uncircumcised in heart, *i.e.* spiritually. From the historical view-point, too, it is impossible to prove that circumcision was in use amongst all the nations mentioned along with Judah. Only of the Egyptians does Herod. ii. 36 f., 104, record that they practised

¹ Jerome writes: *multarum ex quadam parte gentium, et maxime quæ Judææ Palæstinæque confines sunt, usque hodie populi circumciduntur, et præcipue Ægypti et Idumæi, Ammonitæ et Moabitæ et omnis regio Saracenorum, quæ habitat in solitudine*

circumcision; and if we accept the testimony of all other ancient authors, Herod.'s statement concerns only the priests and those initiated into the mysteries of Egypt, not the Egyptian people as a whole; cf. my *Bibl. Archæol.* i. S. 307 f. The only ground for attributing the custom of circumcision to the Moabites and Arabs, is the fact that Esau and Ishmael, the ancestors of these peoples, were circumcised. But the inference drawn therefrom is not supported by historical testimony. Indeed, so far as the Edomites are concerned, Josephus testifies directly the contrary, since in *Antt.* xiii. 9. 1, he tells us that when John Hyrcanus had conquered this people, he offered them the choice of forsaking their country or adopting circumcision, and that they chose the latter alternative. As to the ancient Arabs, we find in the *Ztschr. für die Kunde des Morgl.* iii. S. 230, a notice of the tribe 'Adnân, where we are told that the warriors of this tribe consist of uncircumcised young men along with those already circumcised. But this gives us no certain testimony to the universal prevalence of circumcision; for the notice comes from a work in which pre- and post-Mohammedan traditions are confounded. Finally, there is no historical trace of the custom of circumcision amongst the Ammonites and Moabites. חֲפֵצֵי here, and xxv. 23, xlix. 32: those polled, cropped at the edges of the beard and sides of the head, are such as have the hair cut from off the temples and the forehead, observing a custom which, according to Herod. iii. 8,¹ was usual amongst some of the tribes of the Arabian Desert. The imitation of this practice was forbidden to the Israelites by the law, Lev. xix. 27; from which passage we may see that חֲפֵצֵי refers to the head and the beard. Acc. to xlix. 32, cf. with ver. 28, the tribes meant belonged to the Kedarenes, descended according to Gen. xxv. 13 from Ishmael. In the wilderness, i.e. the Arabian Desert to the east of Palestine. By means of the predicate "uncircumcised in heart," the whole house of Israel, i.e. the whole covenant people, is put in contrast with the heathen. Circumcision involved the obligation to walk blameless before God (Gen. xvii. 1), and, as sign of the covenant, to keep God's commandments. If this condition was not

¹ Τῶν τριχῶν τὴν κουρὴν κείρεσθαί Φασι, καθάπερ αὐτὸν τὸν Διόνυσον κεκάρθαι, κείρονται δὲ ὑποτρόχαλα, περιξηροῦντες τοὺς κροτάφους.

fulfilled, if the heart remained uncircumcised, Israel lost all pre-eminence over the heathen, and was devoid of all room for glorying in the sight of God, just as the heathen were, who know not God the Lord, who have turned the truth of God into unrighteousness, and in their unrighteousness have become liable to the judgment of God.

Chap. x. 1-16. Warning against idolatry by means of a view of the nothingness of the false gods (vers. 1-5), and a counter-view of the almighty and everlasting God (vers. 6-11) and of His governing care in the natural world. This warning is but a further continuation of the idea of ix. 23, that Israel's glory should consist in Jahveh who doth grace, right, and justice upon earth. In order thoroughly to impress this truth on the backsliding and idolatrous people, Jeremiah sets forth the nullity of the gods feared by the heathen, and, by showing how these gods are made of wood, plated with silver and gold, proves that these dead idols, which have neither life nor motion, cannot be objects of fear; whereas Jahveh is God in truth, a living and everlasting God, before whose anger the earth trembles, who has created the earth, and rules it, who in the day of visitation will also annihilate the false gods.¹

¹ This whole passage is declared by Movers (*de utr. rec. Jer.* p. 43), de W., Hitz., and Näg. to be spurious and a late interpolation; because, as they allege, it interrupts the continuity, because its matter brings us down to the time of the Babylonian exile, and because the language of it diverges in many respects from Jeremiah's. Against these arguments Küper, Haev., Welte, and others have made a stand. See my *Manual of Introd.* § 75, 1.—By the exhibition of the coherence of the thought given in the text, we have already disposed of the argument on which most stress is laid by the critics referred to, the alleged interruption of the connection. How little weight this argument is entitled to, may over and above be seen from the fact that Graf holds ix. 22-25 to be an interpolation, by reason of the want of connection; in which view neither Movers preceded him, nor has Hitz. or Näg. followed him. The second reason, that the subject-matter brings us down to the time of the exile, rests upon a misconception of the purpose in displaying the nothingness of the false gods. In this there is presupposed neither a people as yet unspotted by idolatry, nor a people purified therefrom; but, in order to fill the heart with a warmer love for the living God and Lord of the world, Israel's own God, the bias towards the idols, deep-seated in the hearts of the people, is taken to task and attacked in that which lies at its root, namely, the fear of the power of the heathen's gods. Finally, as to the language of the passage, Movers tried to show

Vers. 1-5. *The nothingness of the false gods.*—Ver. 1. "Hear the word which Jahveh speaketh unto you, house of Israel! Ver. 2. Thus saith Jahveh: To the ways of the heathen use yourselves not, and at the signs of the heaven be not dismayed, because the heathen are dismayed at them. Ver. 3. For the ordinances of the peoples are vain. For it is wood, which one hath cut out of the forest, a work of the craftsman's hands with the axe. Ver. 4. With silver and with gold he decks it, with nails and hammers they fasten it, that it move not. Ver. 5. As a lathe-wrought pillar are they, and speak not; they are borne, because they cannot walk. Be not afraid of them; for they do not hurt, neither is it in them to do good."

This is addressed to the house of Israel, *i.e.* to the whole covenant people; and "house of Israel" points back to "all the house of Israel" in ix. 25. **אֱלֹהֵיכֶם** for **עֲלֵיכֶם**, as frequently in Jeremiah. The way of the heathen is their mode of life, espe-

that the whole not only belonged to the time of the pseudo-Isaiah, but that it was from his hand. Against this Graf has pronounced emphatically, with the remark that the similarity is not greater than is inevitable in the discussion of the same subject; whereas, he says, the diversity in expression is so great, that it does not even give us any reason to suppose that the author of this passage had the pseudo-Isaiah before him when he was writing. This assertion is certainly an exaggeration; but it contains thus much of truth, that along with individual similarities in expression, the diversities are so great as to put out of the question all idea of the passage's having been written by the author of Isa. xl.-lxvi. In several verses Jeremiah's characteristic mode of expression is unmistakeable. Such are the frequent use of **הַבֵּל** for the idols, vers. 3 and 15, cf. viii. 19, xiv. 22, and **עַת פִּקְדָתָם**, ver. 15, cf. viii. 12, xlvi. 21, l. 27, neither of which occurs in the second part of Isaiah; and **הוֹבִישׁ**, ver. 14, for which Isaiah uses **בִּוֶּשׁ**, xlii. 17, xlv. 11. Further, in passages cognate in sense the expression is quite different; cf. 4 and 9 with Isa. xl. 19, 20, xli. 7, where we find **יָמוּט** instead of **יָפִיץ**, which is not used by Isaiah in the sense of "move;" cf. ver. 5 with Isa. xlvi. 7 and xli. 23; ver. 12 with Isa. xlv. 18. Finally, the two common expressions cannot prove anything, because they are found in other books, as **שֹׁכֵבֵי נְחֹלָתוֹ**, ver. 16 and Isa. lxiii. 17, derived from Deut. xxxii. 9; or **יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת שָׁמֹ**, which is used frequently by Amos; cf. Amos iv. 13, v. 27, v. 8, ix. 6, cf. with Jer. xxxiii. 2.—Even **נֶכֶךְ** in the sense of molten image in ver. 14, as in Isa. xli. 29, xlviii. 5, is found also in Dan. xi. 8; consequently this use of the word is no peculiarity of the second part of Isaiah.

cially their way of worshipping their gods; cf. ἡ ὁδὸς, Acts ix. 2, xix. 9. לָמַד c. לָ, accustom oneself to a thing, used in xiii. 21 with the synonymous עָל, and in Ps. xviii. 35 (Piel) with לָ. The signs of heaven are unwonted phenomena in the heavens, eclipses of the sun and moon, comets, and unusual conjunctions of the stars, which were regarded as the precursors of extraordinary and disastrous events. We cannot admit Hitz.'s objection, that these signs in heaven were sent by Jahveh (Joel iii. 3, 4), and that before these, as heralds of judgment, not only the heathen, but the Jews themselves, had good cause to be dismayed. For the signs that marked the dawning of the day of the Lord are not merely such things as eclipses of sun and moon, and the like. There is still less ground for Näg.'s idea, that the signs of heaven are such as, being permanently there, call forth religious adoration from year to year, the primitive constellations (Job ix. 9), the twelve signs of the zodiac; for נִחַת (נִחַתוֹ), to be in fear, *consternari*, never means, even in Mal. ii. 5, regular or permanent adoration. "For the heathen," etc., gives the cause of the fear: the heathen are dismayed before these, because in the stars they adored supernatural powers.—Ver. 3. The reason of the warning counsel: The ordinances of the peoples, *i.e.* the religious ideas and customs of the heathen, are vanity. הֵוָה refers to and is in agreement with the predicate; cf. Ew. § 319, c. The vanity of the religious ordinances of the heathen is proved by the vanity of their gods. "For wood, which one has hewn out of the forest," *sc.* it is, *viz.* the god. The predicate is omitted, and must be supplied from הֵבֵל, a word which is in the plural used directly for the false gods; cf. viii. 19, Deut. xxxii. 21, etc. With the axe, *sc.* wrought. מַעֲצָוֶיךָ Rashi explains as axe, and suitably; for here it means in any case a carpenter's tool, whereas this is doubtful in Isa. xlv. 12. The images were made of wood, which was covered with silver plating and gold; cf. Isa. xxx. 22, xl. 19. This Jeremiah calls adorning them, making them fair with silver and gold. When the images were finished, they were fastened in their places with hammer and nails, that they might not tumble over; cf. Isa. xli. 7, xl. 20. When thus complete, they are like a lathe-wrought pillar. In Judg. iv. 5, where alone this word elsewhere occurs, הָיִטִּי means palm-tree (= הָיִטֵּר).

here, by a later, derivative usage, = pillar, in support of which we can appeal to the Talmudic *תָּמִיר*, *columnam facere*, and to the O. T. *תִּימָרָה*, pillar of smoke. *מְקֻשָּׁה* is the work of the turning-lathe, Ex. xxv. 18, 31, etc. Lifeless and motionless as a turned pillar.¹ Not to be able to speak is to be without life; not to walk, to take not a single step, *i.e.* to be without all power of motion; cf. Isa. xlvi. 7. The *Chald.* paraphrases correctly: *quia non est in iis spiritus vitalis ad ambulandum*. The incorrect form *יִנְשְׂאוּ* for *יִנְשְׂאוּ* is doubtless only a copyist's error, induced by the preceding *נִשְׂאוּ*. They can do neither good nor evil, neither hurt nor help; cf. Isa. xli. 23. *אֹתָם* for *אֵתָם*, as frequently; see on i. 16.

Vers. 6-11. *The almighty power of Jahveh, the living God.*—Ver. 6. "None at all is like Thee, Jahveh; great art Thou, and Thy name is great in might. Ver. 7. Who would not fear Thee, Thou King of the peoples? To Thee doth it appertain; for among all the wise men of the peoples, and in all their kingdoms, there is none at all like unto Thee. Ver. 8. But they are all together brutish and foolish; the teaching of the vanities is wood. Ver. 9. Beaten silver, from Tarshish it is brought, and gold from Uphaz, work of the craftsman and of the hands of the goldsmith; blue and red purple is their clothing; the work of cunning workmen are they all. Ver. 10. But Jahveh is God in truth, He is living God and everlasting King; at His wrath the earth trembles, and the peoples abide not His indignation. Ver. 11. Thus shall ye say unto them:

¹ Ew., Hitz., Graf, Näg. follow in the track of Movers, *Phöniz.* i. S. 622, who takes *מְקֻשָּׁה* acc. to Isa. i. 8 for a cucumber garden, and, acc. to *Epist. Jerem.* v. 70, understands by *מְקֻשָּׁה* the figure of Priapus in a cucumber field, serving as a scare-crow. But even if we admit that there is an allusion to the verse before us in the mockery of the gods in the passage of *Epist. Jerem.* quoted, running literally as follows: *ὡς περ γὰρ ἐν σικυηράτῳ προβασκανῖον οὐδὲν φυλάσσει, οὕτως οἱ θεοὶ αὐτῶν εἰσὶ ξύλινοι καὶ περίχρσοι καὶ περιάργυροι*; and if we further admit that the author was led to make his comparison by his understanding *מְקֻשָּׁה* in Isa. i. 8 of a cucumber garden;—yet his comparison has so little in common with our verse in point of form, that it cannot at all be regarded as a translation of it, or serve as a rule for the interpretation of the phrase in question. And besides it has yet to be proved that the Israelites were in the habit of setting up images of Priapus as scare-crows.

The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, these shall perish from the earth and from under the heavens."

In this second strophe Jahveh is contrasted, as the only true God and Lord of the world, with the lifeless gods. There is no need to fear, but it behoves all to fear the almighty God, since in His wrath He can destroy nations. When compared with Ps. lxxxvi. 8, the נִי in נִי־נִי seems redundant,—so much so, that Ven. pronounces it a copyist's error, and Hitz. sets it aside by changing the vowels. The word as it stands contains a double negation, and is usually found only in dependent clauses with a strong negative force: so that there is none. Here it has the same force, but at the beginning of the sentence: none at all is as Thou; cf. Ew. § 323, *a*. Great is Thy name, *i.e.* the manifestation of Thee in the world, in Thy government of the earth. "In (or with) might" belongs to "great:" great with might, displaying itself in acts of might; cf. xvi. 21. Who would not fear Thee? a negative setting of the thought: every one must fear Thee. King of the nations; cf. Ps. xxii. 29, xlvii. 8 f., xcvi. 10. נִי־נִי from נִי־נִי , *ἀπ. λεγ.* equivalent to נִי־נִי (whence נִי־נִי), to be seemly, suitable. Among the wise men of the peoples none is like Thee, so as that any should be able to make head against Thee by any clever stroke; cf. Isa. xix. 12, xxix. 14. Nor is there in any kingdom of the peoples any one like Jahveh, *i.e.* in might. It is not merely earthly kings that are meant, but the gods of the heathen as well. In no heathen kingdom is there any power to be compared with Jahveh. We are led here to think also of the pagan gods by ver. 8, where the wisdom and almighty power of the living God are contrasted with foolishness and vanity of the false gods. בְּאַחַת is not: *in uno* = *in una re*, *sc. idololatria* (Rabb.); nor is it, as Hitz. in most strained fashion makes it: by means of one thing, *i.e.* by (or at) a single word, the word which comes immediately after: it is wood. אַחַת is unquestionably neuter, and the force of it here is collective, = all together, like the Chald. בְּחֶרֶד . The nominative to "are brutish" is "the peoples." The verb בָּעִר is denom. from בָּעִר , to be brutish, occurring elsewhere in the Kal only in Ps. xciv. 8, Ezek. xxi. 36; in the Niph. vers. 14, 21, li. 17, Isa. xix. 11. בָּעִר as verb is found only here; elsewhere we have בָּעִל , foolish, and בָּעִל , folly (Cant. vii. 25), and,

as a verb, the transposed form כָּבֵל. The remaining words of the verse make up one clause; the construction is the same as in ver. 3a, but the sense is not: "a mere vain doctrine is the wood," *i.e.* the idol is itself but a doctrine of vanities. In this way Ew. takes it, making "wood" the subject of the clause and מוֹסֵר the predicate. מוֹסֵר הַבָּלִים is the antithesis to יהוה, Deut. xi. 2, Prov. iii. 11, Job v. 17. As the latter is the *παιδεία* of the Lord, so the former is the *παιδεία* of the false gods (הַבָּלִים, cf. viii. 19.) The *παιδεία* of Jahveh displayed itself, acc. to Deut. xi. 2, in deeds of might by means of which Jahveh set His people Israel free from the power of Egypt. Consequently it is the education of Israel by means of acts of love and chastenings, or, taken more generally, the divine leading and guidance of the people. Such a *παιδεία* the null and void gods could not give to their worshippers. Their *παιδεία* is wood, *i.e.* not: wooden, but nothing else than that which the gods themselves are—wood, which, however it be decked up (ver. 9), remains a mere lifeless block. So that the thought of ver. 8 is this: The heathen, with all their wise men, are brutish; since their gods, from which they should receive wisdom and instruction, are wood. Starting from this, ver. 9 continues to this effect: However much this wood be decked out with silver, gold, and purple raiment, it remains but the product of men's hands; by no such process does the wood become a god. The description of the polishing off of the wood into a god is loosely attached to the predicate עֵץ, by way of an enumeration of the various things made use of therefor. The specification served to make the picture the more graphic; what idols were made of was familiar to everybody. מִרְקָע, beat out into thin plates for coating over the wooden image; cf. Ex. xxxix. 3, Num. xvii. 3 f. As to תַּרְשִׁישׁ, *Tartessus* in Spain, the source of the silver, see on Ezek. xxvii. 12. Gold from Ophir; אֹפִיר here and Dan. x. 5 is only a dialectical variety of אֹפִיר, see on 1 Kings ix. 27. As to blue and red purple, see on Ex. xxv. 4. הַחֲכָמִים, skilful artisans, cf. Isa. xl. 20. They all, *i.e.* all the idols.—Ver. 10. Whereas Jahveh is really and truly God. אֱלֹהִים אֶמֶת (standing in apposition), God in truth, "truth" being strongly contrasted with "vanity," and "living God" (cf. Deut. v. 23) with the dead gods (vers. 5, 8); and everlasting King of the whole world

(cf. Ps. x. 16, xxix. 10, Ex. xv. 18), before whose wrath the earth trembles and the peoples quake with terror; cf. Nah. i. 5, Joel ii. 11, Ps. xcvi. 5. לֹא יִכְלֶי (written as in ii. 13), they hold not, do not hold out, do not endure.

Ver. 11 is Chaldee. But it must not be regarded as a gloss that has found its way into the text, on the grounds on which Houb., Ven., Ros., Ew., Hitz., Gr., etc., so regard it, namely, because it is Chaldee, and because there is an immediate connection between vers. 10 and 12. Both the language in which the verse is written, and the subject-matter of it, are unfavourable to this view. The latter does not bear the character of a gloss; and no copyist would have interpolated a Chaldee verse into the Hebrew text. Besides, the verse is found in the Alexandrian version; and in point of sense it connects very suitably with ver. 10: Jahveh is everlasting King, whereas the gods which have not made heaven and earth shall perish from the earth and from under the heavens. This the Israelites are to say to the idolaters. אֱלֹהִים is the harder form for אֱלֹהִי. The last word, אֱלֹהִי, is Hebrew; it does not belong to אֱלֹהִי, but serves to emphasize the subject: the gods—these shall perish. Jeremiah wrote the verse in Chaldee, *ut Judæis suggerat, quomodo Chaldæis (ad quos non nisi Chaldaice loqui poterant) paucis verbis respondendum sit*, as Seb. Schm. has remarked. The thought of this verse is a fitting conclusion to the exhortation not to fear the gods of the heathen; it corresponds to the 5th verse, with which the first strophe concludes the warning against idolatry. The Israelites are not only not to fear the null and void gods of the heathen, but they are to tell the heathen that their gods will perish from the earth and from under the heavens.

Vers. 12–16. *The third strophe.*—In it the almighty power of the living God is shown from His providential government of nature, the overthrow of the false gods in the time of judgment is declared, and, finally, the Creator of the universe is set forth as the God of Israel.—Ver. 12. “That made the earth by His power, that founded the world by His wisdom, and by His understanding stretched out the heavens. Ver. 13. When He thundering makes the roar of waters in the heavens, He causes clouds to rise from the ends of the earth, makes lightnings

for the rain, and brings the wind forth out of His treasures. Ver. 14. Brutish becomes every man without knowledge; ashamed is every goldsmith by reason of the image, for falsehood is his molten image, and there is no spirit in them. Ver. 15. Vanity are they, a work of mockery; in the time of their visitation they perish. Ver. 16. Not like these is the portion of Jacob: the framer of (the) all is He, and Israel is the stock of His inheritance: Jahveh of hosts is His name."

In point of form, "that made the earth," etc., connects with "Jahveh God," ver. 10; but in respect of its matter, the description of God as Creator of heaven and earth is led up to by the contrast: The gods which have not made the heaven and the earth shall perish. The subject to עֲשֶׂה and the following verbs is not expressed, but may be supplied from the contrasted statement of ver. 11, or from the substance of the several statements in ver. 12. The connection may be taken thus: The true God is the one making the earth by His power = is He that made, etc. As the creation of the earth is a work of God's almighty power, so the establishing, the founding of it upon the waters (Ps. xxiv. 2) is an act of divine wisdom, and the stretching out of the heavens over the earth like a tent (Isa. xl. 22; Ps. civ. 2) is a work of intelligent design. On this cf. Isa. xlii. 5, xliv. 24, xlv. 18, li. 13. Every thunder-storm bears witness to the wise and almighty government of God, ver. 13. The words קוֹל ה' are difficult. Acc. to Ew. § 307, *b*, they stand for קוֹל ה' ה': when He gives His voice, *i.e.* when He thunders. In support of this it may be said, that the mention of lightnings, rain, and wind suggests such an interpretation. But the transposition of the words cannot be justified. Hitz. has justly remarked: The putting of the accusative first, taken by itself, might do; but not when it must at the same time be *stat. constr.*, and when its genitive thus separated from it would assume the appearance of being an accusative to ה'. Besides, we would expect ה' קוֹל rather than קוֹל ה'. קוֹל ה' cannot grammatically be rendered: the voice which He gives, as Nög. would have it, but: the voice of His giving; and "roar of waters" must be the accusative of the object, governed by ה'. Hence we must protest against the explanation of L. de Dieu: *ad vocem dationis ejus multitudo aquarum est in cælo*, at least if

iv. 19, 20, where it is said of sun, moon, and stars that Jahveh has apportioned (חָלַק) them to the heathen as gods, but has taken Israel that it may be to Him נַחֲלָה לְעַם; accordingly Israel is in Dent. xxxii. 9 called חֵלֶק יְהוָה, while in Ps. xvi. 5 David praises Jahveh as מְנַחֵלֵינוּ. For He is the framer הַבֵּל, *i.e.* of the universe. Israel is the stock of His inheritance, *i.e.* the race which belongs to Him as a peculiar possession. שְׁבֵט נַחֲלָתוֹ is like חֵבֶל נַחֲלָתוֹ, Dent. xxxii. 9; in Ps. lxxiv. 2 it is said of Mount Zion, and in Isa. lxiii. 17 it is used in the plural, שְׁבֵטֵי נִי, of the godly servants of the Lord. The name of this God, the framer of the universe, is Jahveh of hosts—the God whom the hosts of heaven, angels and stars, serve, the Lord and Ruler of the whole world; cf. Isa. liv. 5, Amos iv. 13.

Vers. 17-25. *The captivity of the people, their lamentation for the devastation of the land, and entreaty that the punishment may be mitigated.*—Ver. 17. "Gather up thy bundle out of the land, thou that sittest in the siege. Ver. 18. For thus hath Jahveh spoken: Behold, I hurl forth the inhabitants of the land this time, and press them hard, that they may find them. Ver. 19. Woe is me for my hurt! grievous is my stroke! yet I think: This is my suffering, and I will bear it! Ver. 20. My tent is despoiled, and all my cords are rent asunder. My sons have forsaken me, and are gone: none stretches forth my tent any more, or hangs up my curtains. Ver. 21. For the shepherds are become brutish, and have not sought Jahveh; therefore they have not dealt wisely, and the whole flock is scattered.—Ver. 22. Hark! a rumour: behold, it comes, and great commotion from the land of midnight, to make the cities of Judah a desolation, an abode of jackals.—Ver. 23. I know, Jahveh, that the way of man is not in himself, nor in the man that walketh to fix his step. Ver. 24. Chasten me, Jahveh, but according to right; not in Thine anger, lest Thou make me little. Ver. 25. Pour out Thy fury upon the peoples that know Thee not, and upon the races that call not upon Thy name! for they have devoured Jacob, have devoured him and made an end of him, and laid his pastures waste."

In ver. 17 the congregation of the people is addressed, and captivity in a foreign land is announced to them. This announcement stands in connection with ix. 25, in so far as

captivity is the accomplishment of the visitation of Judah threatened in ix. 24. That connection is not, however, quite direct; the announcement is led up to by the warning against idolatry of vers. 1-16, inasmuch as it furnishes confirmation of the threat uttered in ver. 15, that the idols shall perish in the day of their visitation, and shows besides how, by its folly in the matter of idolatry, Judah has drawn judgment down on itself. The confession in ver. 21: the shepherds are become brutish, points manifestly back to the description in ver. 14 of the folly of the idolaters, and exhibits the connection of vers. 17-25 with the preceding warning against idolatry. For "gather up," etc., Hitz. translates: gather thy trumpery from the ground; so that the expression would have a contemptuous tone. But the meaning of rubbish cannot be proved to belong to רָבָעָה; and the mockery that would lie in the phrase is out of place. רָבָעָה, from رَكَعَ, *contrahere, con-*

stipare, means that which is put together, packed up, one's bundle. The connection of רָבָעָה and מִצֵּי is pregnant: put up thy bundle and carry it forth of the land. As N. G. Schröder suspected, there is about the expression something of the nature of a current popular phrase, like the German *Schnür dein Bündel*, pack up, i.e. make ready for the road. She who sits in the siege. The daughter of Zion is meant, but we must not limit the scope to the population of Jerusalem; as is clear from "inhabitants of the land," ver. 18, the population of the whole land are comprised in the expression. As to the form יִשְׁבְּתִי, see at xxii. 23. יִשְׁבְּתִי with *dag. lene* after the sibilant, as in Isa. xlvii. 2. "I hurl forth" expresses the violent manner of the captivity; cf. Isa. xxii. 17 f. "This time;" hitherto hostile invasions ended with plundering and the imposition of a tribute: 2 Kings xiv. 14, xvi. 5, xviii. 13 f.—And I press them hard, or close them in, לִמְעַן יִמָּצְאוּ. These words are variously explained, because there is no object expressed, and there may be variety of opinion as to what is the subject. Hitz., Umbr., Näg., take the verb *find* in the sense of *feel*, and so the object צָרָה would easily be supplied from the verb הִצַּרְתִּי: so that they may feel it, i.e. I will press them sensibly. But we cannot make sure of this meaning for מָצְאוּ either from xvii. 9 or from

Eccles. viii. 17, where know (יָדַע) and מָצָא are clearly identical conceptions. Still less is Graf entitled to supply as object : that which they seek and are to find, namely, God. His appeal in support of this to passages like Ps. xxxii. 6, Deut. iv. 27 and 29, proves nothing ; for in such the object is manifestly suggested by the context, which is not the case here. A just conclusion is obtained when we consider that הִצִּירְתִּי contains a play on בִּמְצֹר in ver. 17, and cannot be understood otherwise than as a hemming in by means of a siege. The aim of the siege is to bring those hemmed in under the power of the besiegers, to get at, reach them, or find them. Hence we must take the enemy as subject to “find,” while the object is given in לָהֶם : so that they (the enemy) may find them (the besieged). Thus too Jerome, who translates the disputed verb passively : *et tribulabo eos ut inveniantur* ; while he explains the meaning thus : *sic eos obsideri faciam, sicque tribulabo et coangustabo, ut omnes in urbe reperiantur et effugere nequeant malum*. Taken thus, the second clause serves to strengthen the first : I will hurl forth the inhabitants of this land into a foreign land, and none shall avoid this fate, for I will so hem them in that none shall be able to escape.

This harassment will bring the people to their senses, so that they shall humble themselves under the mighty hand of God. Such feelings the prophet utters at ver. 19 ff., in the name of the congregation, as he did in the like passage iv. 19 f. As from the hearts of those who had been touched by their affliction, he exclaims : Woe is me for my breach ! *i.e.* my crushing overthrow. The breach is that sustained by the state in its destruction, see at iv. 6. נִחַלָּה, grown sick, *i.e.* grievous, incurable is the stroke that has fallen upon me. For this word we have in xv. 18 אֲנִיָּשָׁה, which is explained by “refuseth to be healed.” וְאֵנִי introduces an antithesis : but I say, *sc.* in my heart, *i.e.* I think. Hitz. gives אֵנִי the force of a limitation = nothing further than this, but wrongly ; and, taking the perf. אֲמַרְתִּי as a preterite, makes out the import to be : “in their state of careless security they had taken the matter lightly, saying as it were, If no further calamity than this menace us, we may be well content ;” a thought quite foreign to the context. For “this my suffering” can be nothing else than the “hurt” on

account of which the speaker laments, or the stroke which he calls dangerous, incurable. אֲנִי has, besides, frequently the force of positive asseveration: yea, certainly (cf. Ew. § 354, a), a force readily derived from that of only, nothing else than. And so here: only this, *i.e.* even this is my suffering. מַחְלָה , sickness, here suffering in general, as in Hos. v. 13, Isa. liii. 3 f., etc. The old translators took the Yod as pronoun (my suffering), whence it would be necessary to point אֲנִי , like אֲנִי , Zeph. ii. 9; cf. Ew. § 293, b, Rem.—The suffering which the congregation must bear consists in the spoliation of the land and the captivity of the people, represented in ver. 20 under the figure of a destruction of their tent and the disappearance of their sons. The Chald. has fairly paraphrased the verse thus: my land is laid waste and all my cities are plundered, my people has gone off (into exile) and is no longer here. אֲנִי construed with the accus. like *egredi urbem*; cf. Gen. xlv. 4, etc.—From “my sons have forsaken me” Næg. draws the inference that vers. 19 and 20 are the words of the country personified, since neither the prophet could so speak, nor the people, the latter being indeed identical with the sons, and so not forsaken, but forsaking. This inference rests on a mistaken view of the figure of the daughter of Zion, in which is involved the conception of the inhabitants of a land as the children of the land when personified as mother. Nor is there any evidence that the land is speaking in the words: I think, This is my suffering, etc. It is besides alleged that the words give no expression to any sense of guilt; they are said, on the contrary, to give utterance to a consolation which only an innocent land draws from the fact that a calamity is laid upon it, a calamity which must straightway be borne. This is neither true in point of fact, nor does it prove the case. The words, This is my suffering, etc., indicate resignation to the inevitable, not innocence or undeserved suffering. Hereon Graf remarks: “The suffering was unmerited, in so far as the prophet and the godly amongst the people were concerned; but it was inevitable that he and they should take it upon their shoulders, along with the rest.” Asserted with so great width, this statement cannot be admitted. The present generation bears the punishment not only for the sins of many past generations, but for its own

sins; nor were the godly themselves free from sin and guilt, for they acknowledge the justice of God's chastisement, and pray God to chasten them בְּמִשְׁפָּט, not in anger (ver. 24). Besides, we cannot take the words as spoken by the prophet or by the godly as opposed to the ungodly, since it is the sons of the speaker ("my sons") that are carried captive, who can certainly not be the sons of the godly alone.—Ver. 21. The cause of this calamity is that the shepherds, *i.e.* the princes and leaders of the people (see on ii. 8, iii. 15), are become brutish, have not sought Jahveh, *i.e.* have not sought wisdom and guidance from the Lord. And so they could not deal wisely, *i.e.* rule the people with wisdom. הַשְׂכִּיל is here not merely: have prosperity, but: show wisdom, deal wisely, securing thus the blessed results of wisdom. This is shown both by the contrasted "become brutish" and by the parallel passage, iii. 15. מִרְעִיהֶם, their pasturing, equivalent to "flock of their pasturing," their flock, xxiii. 1.

The calamity over which the people mourns is drawing near, ver. 22. Already is heard the tremendous din of a mighty host which approaches from the north to make the cities of Judah a wilderness. קוֹל שְׁמוֹעָה is an exclamation: listen to the rumour, it is coming near. From a grammatical point of view the subject to "comes" is "rumour," but in point of sense it is that of which the rumour gives notice. Graf weakens the sense by gathering the words into one assertory clause: "They hear a rumour come." The "great commotion" is that of an army on the march, the clattering of the weapons, the stamping and neighing of the war-horses; cf. vi. 23, viii. 16. From the land of midnight, the north, cf. i. 14, iv. 6, etc. "To make the cities," etc., cf. iv. 7, ix. 10.—The rumour of the enemy's approach drives the people to prayer, vers. 23-25. The prayer of these verses is uttered in the name of the congregation. It begins with the confession: Not with man is his way, *i.e.* it is not within man's power to arrange the course of his life, nor in the power of the man who walks to fix his step (! before הֵכֵן merely marking the connection of the thought; cf. Ew. § 348, a). The antithesis to לֹא־אִדָּם and לֹא־יִשׁ, לִיהוָה, with God; cf. Ps. xxxvii. 23, Prov. xvi. 9: Man's heart deviseth his way, but Jahveh establisheth the steps. The

thought is not : it is not in man's option to walk in straight or crooked, good or evil ways, but : the directing of man, the way by which he must go, lies not in his own but in God's power. Hitz. justly finds here the wisdom that admits : "*Mit unserer Macht ist nichts getan*,"—man's destiny is ordained not by himself, but by God. Upon this acquiescence in God's dispensation of events follows the petition : Chasten me, for I have deserved punishment, but chasten *צדקתי*, acc. to right, not in Thine anger ; cf. Ps. vi. 2, xxxviii. 2. A chastening in anger is the judgment of wrath that shall fall on obstinate sinners and destroy them. A chastening acc. to right is one such as is demanded by right (judgment), as the issue of God's justice, in order to the reclamation and conversion of the repentant sinner. "Lest Thou make me little," insignificant, puny ; not merely, diminish me, make me smaller than I now am. For such a decrease of the people would result even from a gentle chastisement. There is no comparative force in the words. To make small, in other words, reduce to a small, insignificant people. This would be at variance with "right," with God's ordained plan in regard of His people. The expression is not equivalent to : not to make an utter end, xxx. 11, etc. The people had no call to pray that they might escape being made an utter end of ; thus much had been promised by God, iv. 27, v. 10.—God is asked to pour forth His fury upon the heathen who know not the Lord nor call upon His name, because they seek to extirpate Jacob (the people of Israel) as the people of God, at this time found in Judah alone. The several words in ver. 25*b* suggest the fury with which the heathen proceed to the destruction of Israel. The present verse is reproduced in Ps. lxxix. 6, 7, a psalm written during the exile, or at least after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans ; but in the reproduction the energetic expansion of the "devoured" is omitted.

CHAP. XI.—XIII.—JUDAH'S FAITHLESSNESS TO COVENANT
OBLIGATIONS, AND THE CONSEQUENCES THEREOF.

In the first part of this compilation of discourses (ch. xi. 1–17) Judah is upbraided for disloyalty to the covenant, on account of which people and kingdom are threatened with sore

disaster. In the second part (xi. 18-xii. 17), the murderous attempt of the people of Anathoth against the prophet's life (xi. 18-23) gives occasion for a description of Judah's irreclaimable perverseness; while Jeremiah's expostulation with God as to the prosperity of godless men, and the reproof therefor received by him from God (xii. 1-6), call forth an announcement that, in spite of God's long-suffering, judgment on Judah and all nations will not be for ever deferred (xii. 7-17). Finally, in the third part, ch. xiii., we have first a further account, by means of a symbolical action to be performed by the prophet, of the abasement of Judah's pride in banishment to the Euphrates (vers. 1-11); and next, an account of the judgment about to fall on Judah in the destruction of Jerusalem, and this both in figurative and in direct language (vers. 12-27).

From the contents of the discourses it appears unquestionable that we have here, gathered into the unity of a written record, various oral addresses of Jeremiah, together with some of the experiences that befell him in the exercise of his calling. There is no foundation for the assertion, that xii. 7-17 is a self-complete prophetic discourse (Hitz.), or a supplement to the rest, written in the last years of Jehoiakim (Graf); nor for the assumption of several commentators, that the composition of ch. xiii. falls into the time of Jehoiachin,—as will be shown when we come to expound the passages referred to. The discourse throughout contains nothing that might not have been spoken or have happened in the time of Josiah; nor have we here any data for determining precisely the dates of the several portions of the whole discourse.

Chap. xi. 1-17. JUDAH'S DISLOYALTY TO THE COVENANT, WITH THE CONSEQUENCES THEREOF.—In vers. 2-8 is a short summary of the covenant made with the fathers; in vers. 9-13 is an account of the breaking of this covenant by Judah, and of the calamity which results therefrom; and in vers. 14-17 further description of this calamity.

Vers. 1-8. "The word which came to Jeremiah from Jahveh, saying: Ver. 2. Hear ye the words of this covenant, and speak to the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem,

Ver. 3. And say thou to them: Thus hath Jahveh, the God of Israel, said: Cursed is the man that heareth not the words of this covenant, Ver. 4. Which I commanded your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the iron furnace, saying: Harken to my voice, and do them according to all which I command you; so shall ye be my people, and I will be your God; Ver. 5. That I may perform the oath which I have sworn unto your fathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as it is this day. And I answered and said: So be it, Jahveh. Ver. 6. Then said Jahveh to me: Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying: Hear ye the words of this covenant and do them. Ver. 7. For I have testified to your fathers in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt unto this day, testifying from early morning on: Harken to my voice! Ver. 8. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked each in the stubbornness of their evil heart; and so I brought on them all the words of this covenant which I have commanded them to do, and they have not done them."

The form of address, ver. 2: hear ye (שִׁמְעוּ), and speak ye (דַּבְּרֻתֶּם), is noteworthy, since we are not told who are to hear and speak; while at ver. 3, in וְאַתָּה יְרֵמְיָהוּ Jeremiah receives the commission to declare the words of the covenant to the people, and to make known in the cities of Judah, etc. (ver. 6). The difficulty is not removed by the plan adopted by Hitz. and Graf from the LXX., of changing וְדַבְּרֻתֶּם into וְשִׁמְעוּ, "and speak them;" for the שִׁמְעוּ remains to be dealt with. To whom, then, is it addressed? Schleussner proposed to change it into שִׁמְעוּ—a purely arbitrary change. In ver. 4 "hearing" is used in the sense of giving ear to, obeying. And in no other sense can it be taken in ver. 1. "The words of this covenant" are, as is clear from the succeeding context, the words of the covenant recorded in the Pentateuch, known from the reading of the Torah. The call to hear the words thereof can only have the meaning of: to give ear to them, take them to heart. Hence Chr. B. Mich. and Schnur. have referred the words to the Jews: Listen, ye Jews and ye citizens of Jerusalem, to the words of the covenant, and make them known to one another,

and exhort one another to observe them. But this paraphrase is hardly consistent with the wording of the verse. Others fancied that the priests and elders were addressed; but if so, these must necessarily have been named. Clearly it is to the prophets in general that the words are spoken, as Kimchi observed; and we must not take "hear ye" as if the covenant was unknown to the prophets, but as intended to remind the prophets of them, that they might enforce them upon the people. Taken thus, this introductory verse serves to exalt the importance of the truths mentioned, to mark them out as truths which God had commanded all the prophets to proclaim. If it be the prophets in general who are addressed in ver. 2, the transition to "and say thou" is easily explained. Jeremiah, too, must himself do that which was the bounden duty of all the prophets, must make the men of Judah and Jerusalem call to mind the curse overhanging transgressors of the covenant. The words: Cursed is the man, etc., are taken from Deut. xxvii. 26, from the directions for the engagement to keep the covenant, which the people were to solemnise upon their entry into Canaan, and which, acc. to Josh. viii. 30 ff., they did solemnise. The quotation is made freely from memory. Instead of "that heareth not the words of this covenant," we find in Deut. *l.c.*: "that confirmeth not (יִקְרֶה) the words of this law to do them." The choice there of the word יִקְרֶה is suggested by its connection with the act of solemnisation enjoined. The recitation and promulgation of the law upon Mount Gerizim and Ebal (Deut. xxvii.) had no other aim than that of solemnly binding the people to keep or follow the law; and this is what Jeremiah means by "hearing." The law to be established is the law of the covenant, *i.e.* the covenant made by Jahveh with Israel, and spoken of in Deut. xxviii. 69 and xxix. 8 as the "words of this covenant." This covenant, which Moses had made with the sons of Israel in the land of Moab (Deut. xxviii. 69), was but a renewal of that solemnly concluded at Sinai (Ex. xxiv.). And so Jeremiah speaks of this covenant as the one which Jahveh commanded the fathers in the day, *i.e.* at the time, of their leaving Egypt. "In the day that," etc., as in vii. 22. "Out of the iron furnace;" this metaphor for the affliction endured by Israel in Egypt is taken from Deut. iv. 20. The

words : hearken unto my voice and do *them* (the words of the covenant), suggest Deut. xxvii. 1, 2 ; and the words : so shall ye be my people, suggest Deut. xxix. 12, a passage which itself points back to Ex. vi. 7 (xix. 5 f.), Lev. xxvi. 12, Deut. vii. 6, etc. That I may establish, *i.e.* perform, the oath which I have sworn unto your fathers, *i.e.* the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Deut. vii. 8, etc.), promising to give them a land flowing, etc. The frequently repeated description of the promised land ; cf. Ex. iii. 8, 17, Deut. vi. 3, etc. בְּיָמֵינוּ, as in Deut. ii. 30, iv. 20, etc., is not : at this time, now (Graf), but : as this day, meaning : as is even now the case, *sc.* that ye still possess this precious land. The assenting reply of the prophet : יֵאָמֵן יְהוָה, yea, or so be it (*γένοιτο*, LXX.), Lord, corresponds to the אָמֵן with which the people, acc. to Deut. xxvii. 15 ff., were to take on themselves the curses attached to the breaking of the law, curses which they did take on themselves when the law was promulgated in Canaan. As the whole congregation did on that occasion, so here the prophet, by his “yea,” expresses his adherence to the covenant, and admits that the engagement is yet in full force for the congregation of God ; and at the same time indicates that he, on his part, is ready to labour for the fulfilment of the covenant, so that the people may not become liable to the curse of the law.—Vers. 6–8. Having set forth the curse to which transgressors of the law are exposed, God commands the prophet to proclaim the words of the covenant to the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem, and to call upon them to do these. “All these words” are those subsequently specified, *i.e.* the commandments of the law (cf. ver. 2). Jeremiah is to proclaim these, because, in spite of unremitting exhortation to hear and give heed to the voice of the Lord, the fathers had paid no regard thereto. קָרָא, not : read aloud (Hitz., Graf), but : proclaim, make known, as in ii. 2, iii. 12, etc. הָעֵד with אֵל, to testify against any one, equivalent to : solemnly to enforce on one with importunate counsel and warning ; cf. Deut. xxx. 19, Ps. l. 7, etc. On הִשְׁמַעְתִּים וְהָעֵד, see at vii. 13.—But they have not hearkened, ver. 8a, running almost literally in the words of vii. 24. “And I brought upon them,” etc., *i.e.* inflicted upon them the punishments with which transgressors of the law were threatened, which curses had

been, in the case of the greater part of the people, the ten tribes, carried to the extreme length, *i.e.* to the length of their banishment from their own land into the midst of the heathen; cf. 2 Kings xvii. 13 ff.

Vers. 9-13. *The people's breach of the covenant, and the consequences of this.*—Ver. 9. "And Jahveh said unto me: Conspiracy is found among the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Ver. 10. They are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, which refused to give ear to my words, and they are gone after other gods to serve them; the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant which I made with their fathers. Ver. 11. Behold, I bring evil upon them, from which they cannot escape; and though they cry to me, I will not hear them. Ver. 12. And the cities of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall go and cry unto the gods unto whom they offer incense, but they shall not help them in the time of their trouble. Ver. 13. For as many as are thy cities, so many are thy gods become, O Judah; and as many as are the streets of Jerusalem, so many altars have ye set up to Shame, altars to offer odours to Baal."

Jeremiah is once more to enforce the words of the covenant upon the people, because they have broken the covenant, returned to the idolatry of the fathers. Conspiracy is found, is to be seen. The people's defection from Jahveh, their breach of faith towards the covenant God, is called conspiracy, because it had become as universal as if it had been initiated by a formal preconcertment. "The former fathers," forefathers of the people, are the Israelites under Moses, who broke the covenant by idolatry while still at Sinai, and those of the time of the Judges. With יִהְיֶה the subject is changed; "they" are not the forefathers, but the prophet's contemporaries. In the last clause of ver. 10 is comprehended the apostasy of the whole people: Like Israel, Judah too has broken the covenant. Israel has been punished for this by being cast out among the heathen, the like doom awaits Judah.—Ver. 11. Because of the covenant broken, the Lord will bring on Judah and Jerusalem evil out of which they shall not come forth, *i.e.* not merely, from which they shall not escape safely, but: in which they shall find no way of rescue; for if in this calamity they

cry to the Lord, He will not hear them. Nor will the gods whom they serve, *i.e.* the false gods, help them then. As to "as many as are," etc., see on ii. 28. "(The) Shame," *i.e.* Baal, as at iii. 24.

Vers. 14–17. *Neither entreaty on their behalf nor their hypocritical worship will avert judgment.*—Ver. 14. "But thou, pray not for this people, neither lift up for them cry or prayer; for I hear them not in the time that they cry unto me for their trouble. Ver. 15. What would my beloved in my house? they who practise guile? Shall vows and holy flesh remove thy calamity from thee? then mayest thou exult. Ver. 16. A green olive, fair for its goodly fruit, Jahveh called thy name; with the noise of great tumult He set fire to it, and its branches brake. Ver. 17. And Jahveh of hosts, that planted thee, hath decreed evil against thee, for the evil of the house of Israel and of the house of Judah which they themselves have done, to provoke me, in that they have offered odours to Baal."

We have already, in chap. vii. 16, met with the declaration that the Lord will not accept any intercession for the covenant-breaking people (ver. 14); the termination of this verse differs slightly in the turn it takes.—*בְּעֵר רָעָתָם* the ancient commentators have almost unanimously rendered: *tempore mali eorum*, as if they had read *בְּעֵת* (this is, in fact, the reading of some codd.); but hardly on sufficient grounds. *בְּעֵר* gives a suitable sense, with the force of the Greek *ἀμφί*, which, like the German *um*, passes into the sense of *wegen*, as the English *about* passes into that of *concerning*.—In vers. 15–17 we have the reason why the Lord will hear neither the prophet's supplication nor the people's cry in their time of need. Ver. 15 is very obscure; and from the Masoretic text it is hardly possible to obtain a suitable sense. "The beloved" of Jahveh is Judah, the covenant people; cf. Deut. xxxiii. 12, where Benjamin is so called, and Jer. xii. 7, where the Lord calls His people *יְרֵמְיָהּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל*. "What is to my beloved in my house?" *i.e.* what has my people to do in my house—what does it want there? "My house" is the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem, as appears from the mention of holy flesh in the second clause. The main difficulty lies in the words *עֲשׂוֹתָהּ הַמִּזְבֵּחַ הַרְבִּים*. Hitz. takes *עֲשׂוֹתָהּ* to be the subject of the clause, and makes the

suffix point back to יִרִי, which, as collective, is to be construed *generis fam.*: what should the accomplishment of his plans be to my beloved in my house? But as adverse to this we must note, *a.* the improbability of יִרִי as used of the people being feminine; *b.* the fact that even if we adopt Hitz.'s change of הַמִּזְבֵּחַ into הַמִּזְמוֹת, yet the latter word does not mean plans or designs to bring offerings. The phrase is clearly to be taken by itself as a continuation of the question; and the suffix to be regarded, with Ew., Umbr., etc., as pointing, in the Aramaic fashion, to the object following: they who practise guile. מִזְמוֹת, a thinking out, devising, usually of hurtful schemes, here guile, as in Ps. cxxxix. 20, Job xxi. 27. What is meant is the hypocrisy of cloaking their apostasy from God by offering sacrifices in the temple, of concealing their idolatry and passing themselves off as worshippers of Jahveh. On the form מִזְמוֹתָה, see Ew. § 173, *g*, Gesen. § 80, Rem. 2, *f*. הַרְבֵּים makes no sense. It belongs manifestly to the words which follow; for it can neither be subject to עֲשׂוֹתָה, nor can it be joined to הַמִּזְמוֹתָה as its genitive. The LXX. render: *μη εὐχαὶ καὶ κρέα ἅγια ἀφελούσιν ἀπὸ σοῦ τὰς κακίας σου*; and following this, Dathe, Dahl., Ew., Hitz. hold הַנְּדָרִים to be the original reading. On the other hand, Maur., Graf, and Näg. think we should read הַרְנִים (after Ps. xxxii. 7) or הִרְנִים, crying, loud supplication; on the ground of Buxtorf's hint, *Anticrit.* p. 661, that probably the Alexandrians had הַרְבֵּים in their text, but, changing the ב for ג, read הַרְנִים. We must make our choice between these two conjectures; for even if הַרְבֵּים did not stand in the codex used by the Alexandrians, it cannot have been the original word. The form רָנִים is, indeed, sufficiently attested by רָנִי פָלֵט, Ps. xxxii. 7; but the meaning of exultation which it has there is here wholly out of place. And we find no case of a plural to רָנָה, which means both exultation and piteous, beseeching cry (*e.g.* vii. 16). So that, although רָנָה is in the LXX. occasionally rendered by *δέησις* (xi. 14, xiv. 12, etc.) or *προσευχή* (1 Kings viii. 28), we prefer the conjecture הַנְּדָרִים; for "vow" is in better keeping with "holy flesh," *i.e.* flesh of sacrifice, Hag. ii. 12, since the vow was generally carried out by offering sacrifice.—Nor do the following words, וְעִבְרִי מַעְלִיָּה וְגו', convey any meaning, without some alteration. As quoted above, they may be translated:

shall pass away from thee. But this can mean neither: they shall be torn from thee, nor: they shall disappoint thee. And even if this force did lie in the words, no statement can begin with the following *כִּי רָעָתְכִי*. If this be a protasis, the verb is wanting. We shall have to change it, after the manner of the LXX., to *יַעֲבִירוּ מֵעָלַי רָעָתְכִי*: shall vows and holy flesh (sacrifice) avert thine evil from thee? For the form *יַעֲבִירוּ* as Hiph. cf. *יִרְרָבִי*, ix. 2. "Thine evil" with the double force: thy sin and shame, and the disaster impending, *i.e.* sin and (judicial) suffering. There is no occasion for any further changes. *אִם*, rendered *ἂν* by the LXX., and so read *אִם* by them, may be completely vindicated: then, *i.e.* if this were the case, if thou couldst avert calamity by sacrifice, then mightest thou exult. Thus we obtain the following as the sense of the whole verse: What mean my people in my temple with their hypocritical sacrifices? Can vows and offerings, presented by you there, avert calamity from you? If it could be so, well might you shout for joy.

This idea is carried on in vers. 16, 17. Judah (Israel) was truly a noble planting of God's, but by defection from the Lord, its God and Creator, it has drawn down on itself this ruin. Jahveh called Judah a green olive with splendid fruit. For a comparison of Israel to an olive, cf. Hos. xiv. 7, Ps. lii. 10, cxxviii. 3. The fruit of the tree is the nation in its individual members. The naming of the name is the representation of the state of the case, and so here: the growth and prosperity of the people. The contrasted state is introduced by *לִקְוֹל ה'* without adversative particle, and is thus made to seem the more abrupt and violent (Hitz.). Noise of tumult (*הִמְקִלָּה*), occurring besides here only in Ezek. i. 24 as equivalent to *הִמְנוֹן*, *i.e.* of the tumult of war, cf. Isa. xiii. 4; not: roar of the thunderstorm or crash of thunder (*Nägel*, Graf). *עָלֶיהָ* for *בָּהּ*, cf. xvii. 27, xxi. 14, etc. The suffix is regulated by the thing represented by the olive, *i.e.* Judah as a kingdom. Its branches brake; *רָעַע*, elsewhere only transitive, here intransitive, analogously to *רָצַץ* in Isa. xlii. 4. Hitz. renders less suitably: its branches look bad, as being charred, robbed of their gay adornment. On this head cf. Ezek. xxxi. 12. The setting of fire to the olive tree Israel came about through its enemies, who

broke up one part of the kingdom after the other, who had already destroyed the kingdom of the ten tribes, and were now about to destroy Judah next. That the words apply not to Judah only, but to Israel as well, appears from ver. 17, where the Lord, who has planted Israel, is said to have spoken, *i.e.* decreed evil for the sin of the two houses, Israel and Judah. וַיִּצְוֶה is not directly = decree, but intimates also the utterance of the decree by the prophet. וְהָיָה after וַיִּצְוֶה is *dat. incomm.*: the evil which they have done to their hurt; cf. xliv. 3, where the dative is wanting. Hitz. finds in וְהָיָה an intimation of voluntary action, as throwing back the deed upon the subject as an act of free choice; cf. Ew. § 315, *a*.

Chap. xi. 18-xii. 17. EVIDENCE THAT JUDAH IS UNRECLAIMABLE, AND THAT THE SORE JUDGMENTS THREATENED CANNOT BE AVERTED.—As a practical proof of the people's determination not to reform, we have in

Vers. 18-23 an account of *the designs of the inhabitants of Anathoth against the prophet's life*, inasmuch as it was their ill-will towards his prophecies that led them to this crime. They are determined not to hear the word of God, chiding and punishing them for their sins, and so to put the preacher of this word out of the way.—Ver. 18. "And Jahveh gave me knowledge of it, and I knew it; then showedst Thou me their doings. Ver. 19. And I was as a tame lamb that is led to the slaughter, and knew not that they plotted designs against me: Let us destroy the tree with the fruit thereof, and cut him off out of the land of the living, that his name may be no more remembered. Ver. 20. But Jahveh of hosts, that judgeth justly, trieth reins and heart—I shall see Thy vengeance on them, for to Thee have I confided my cause. Ver. 21. Therefore thus hath Jahveh spoken against the men of Anathoth, that seek after thy life, saying, Thou shalt not prophesy in the name of Jahveh, that thou die not by our hand. Ver. 22. Therefore thus hath Jahveh of hosts spoken: Behold, I will punish them; the young men shall die by the sword, their sons and daughters shall die by famine. Ver. 23. And a remnant shall not remain to them; for I bring evil upon the men of Anathoth, the year of their visitation."

Jeremiah had not himself observed the designs of the people of Anathoth against his life, because the thing was carried on in secret; but the Lord made it known to him. **וְאִנִּי**, then, *sc.* when I knew nought of their murderous intent; cf. ver. 19. "Their doings," *i.e.* those done in secret. Ver. 19. **בְּכֶשֶׁל אֱלֵיָּהוּ**, *agnus mansuetus*, a tame pet-lamb, such as the Arabs used to keep, such as the Hebrews too, 2 Sam. xii. 3, kept; familiar with the household, reared by them in the house, that does not suspect when it is being taken to be killed. In like manner Jeremiah had no suspicion that his countrymen were harbouring evil designs against him. These designs are quoted directly without **לְאִמֵּר**. The saying is a figurative or proverbial one: we will destroy the tree **בְּלֶחֶם**. This word is variously taken. The ordinary meaning, food for men and beasts, usually bread, seems not to be suitable. And so Hitz. wishes to read **בְּלֶחֶם**, in its sap (cf. Deut. xxxiv. 7, Ezek. xxi. 3), because **לֶחֶם** may mean grain, but it does not mean fruit. Näg. justly remarks against this view: What is here essential is simply the produce of the tree, furnished for the use of man. The word of the prophet was a food which they abhorred (cf. ver. 21*b*). As **לֶחֶם** originally meant food, we here understand by it the edible product of the tree, that is, its fruit, in opposition to sap, wood, leaves. This interpretation is confirmed by

the Arabic; the Arabs use both **أَكَل** and **لَحْم** of the fruit of a tree, see ill. in Rosenm. *Schol. ad h. l.* The proverbial saying is given in plain words in the next clause. We will cut him (*i.e.* the prophet) off, etc.—Ver. 20. Therefore Jeremiah calls upon the Lord, as the righteous judge and omniscient searcher of hearts, to punish his enemies. This verse is repeated almost verbally in xx. 12, and in substance in xvii. 10. Who trieth reins and heart, and therefore knows that Jeremiah has done no evil. **אֲנִי יָדָעָה** is future as expressing certainty that God will interfere to punish; for to Him he has wholly committed his cause. **נִלְיָהּ**, Pi. of **נָלָה**, is taken by Hitz., Ew., etc. in the sense of **נָלָה**: on Thee have I rolled over my cause; in support of this they adduce Ps. xxii. 9, xxxvii. 5, Prov. xvi. 3, as parallel passages. It is true that this interpretation can be vindicated grammatically, for **נָלָה** might have assumed the form of **נָלָה**

(Ew. § 121, *a*). But the passages quoted are not at all decisive, since Jeremiah very frequently gives a new sense to quotations by making slight alterations on them; and in the passage cited we read נָלַל אֶת רִיב. We therefore adhere, with Grot. and Ros., to the usual meaning of נָלַל; understanding that in making known there is included the idea of entrusting, a force suggested by the construction with לֹא instead of לְ. רִיב, controversy, cause.—The prophet declares God's vengeance to the instigators of the plots against his life, vers. 21-23. The introductory formula in ver. 21 is repeated in ver. 22, on account of the long intervening parenthesis. "That thou diest not" is introduced by the י of consecution. The punishment is to fall upon the entire population of Anathoth; on the young men of military age (בְּחִירִים), a violent death in war; on the children, death by famine consequent on the siege. Even though all had not had a share in the complot, yet were they at heart just as much alienated from God and ill-disposed towards His word. "Year of their visitation" is still dependent on "bring." This construction is simpler than taking שָׁנָה for *accus. adverb.*, both here and in xxiii. 12.

Chap. xii. 1-6. *The prophet's displeasure at the prosperity of the wicked.*—The enmity experienced by Jeremiah at the hands of his countrymen at Anathoth excites his displeasure at the prosperity of the wicked, who thrive and live with immunity. He therefore begins to expostulate with God, and demands from God's righteousness that they be cut off out of the land (vers. 1-4); whereupon the Lord reproves him for this outburst of ill-nature and impatience by telling him that he must patiently endure still worse.—This section, the connection of which with the preceding is unmistakeable, shows by a concrete instance the utter corruptness of the people; and it has been included in the prophecies because it sets before us the greatness of God's long-suffering towards a people ripe for destruction.

Ver. 1. "Righteous art Thou, Jahveh, if I contend with Thee; yet will I plead with Thee in words. Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper, are all secure that deal faithlessly? Ver. 2. Thou hast planted them, yea, they have taken root; grow, yea, bring forth fruit. Near art Thou in their mouth, yet far from their reins. Ver. 3. But Thou, Jahveh, knowest

me, seest me, and triest mine heart toward Thee. Tear them away like sheep to the slaughter, and devote them for a day of slaughter. Ver. 4. How long is the earth to mourn and the herb of the field to wither? For the wickedness of them that dwell therein, gone are cattle and fowl; for they say: He sees not our end.—Ver. 5. If with the footmen thou didst run and they wearied thee, how couldst thou contend with the horses? and if thou trustest in the land of peace, how wilt thou do in the glory of Jordan? Ver. 6. For even thy brethren and thy father's house, even they are faithless towards thee, yea, they call after thee with full voice. Believe them not, though they speak friendly to thee.”

The prophet's complaint begins by acknowledging: Thou art righteous, Lord, if I would dispute with Thee, *i.e.* would accuse Thee of injustice. I could convict Thee of no wrong; Thou wouldst appear righteous and prove Thyself in the right. Ps. li. 6; Job ix. 2 ff. With אֵל comes in a limitation: only he will speak pleas of right, maintain a suit with Jahveh, will set before Him something that seems incompatible with God's justice, namely the question: Why the way of the wicked prospers, why they that act faithlessly are in ease and comfort? On this cf. Job xxi. 7 ff., where Job sets forth at length the contradiction between the prosperity of the wicked and the justice of God's providence. The way of the wicked is the course of their life, their conduct. God has planted them, *i.e.* has placed them in their circumstances of life; like a tree they have struck root into the ground; they go on, *i.e.* grow, and bear fruit, *i.e.* their undertakings succeed, although they have God in their mouth only, not in their heart.—Ver. 3. To show that he has cause for his question, Jeremiah appeals to the omniscience of the Searcher of hearts. God knows him, tries his heart, and therefore knows how it is disposed towards Himself (אֵל belongs to אֵל, the אֵל indicating the relation—here, viz., fidelity—in which the heart stands to God; cf. 2 Sam. xvi. 17). Thus God knows that in his heart there is no unfaithfulness, and that he maintains to God an attitude altogether other than that of those hypocrites who have God on their lips only; and knows too the enmity which, without having provoked it, he experiences. How then comes it about

that with the prophet it goes ill, while with those faithless ones it goes well? God, as the righteous God, must remove this contradiction. And so his request concludes: Tear them out (רָחַץ of the tearing out of roots, Ezek. xvii. 9); here Hiph. with the same force (pointing back to the metaphor of their being rooted, ver. 2), implying total destruction. Hence also the illustration: as sheep, that are dragged away out of the flock to be slaughtered. Devote them for the day of slaughter, like animals devoted to sacrifice.—Ver. 4 gives the motive of his prayer: How long shall the earth suffer from the wickedness of these hypocrites? be visited with drought and dearth for their sins? This question is not to be taken as a complaint that God is punishing without end; Hitz. so takes it, and then proposes to delete it as being out of all connection in sense with ver. 3 or ver. 5. It is a complaint because of the continuance of God's chastisements, drawn down by the wickedness of the apostates, which are bringing the land to utter ruin. The mourning of the land and the withering of the herb is a consequence of great drought; and the drought is a divine chastisement: cf. iii. 3, v. 24 ff., xiv. 2 ff., etc. But this falls not only on the unfaithful, but upon the godly too, and even the beasts, cattle, and birds suffer from it; and so the innocent along with the guilty. There seems to be injustice in this. To put an end to this injustice, to rescue the innocent from the curse brought by the wickedness of the ungodly, the prophet seeks the destruction of the wicked. נִסְּפָה, to be swept away. The 3d pers. fem. sing. with the plural נִי—, as in Joel i. 20 and often; cf. Ew. § 317, a, Gesen. § 146, 3. "They that dwell therein" are inhabitants of the land at large, the ungodly multitude of the people, of whom it is said in the last clause: they say, He will not see our end. The sense of these words is determined by the subject. Many follow the LXX. (οὐκ ὀφείλει ὁ Θεὸς ὁδοῦς ἡμῶν) and refer the seeing to God. God will not see their end, i.e. will not trouble Himself about it (Schnur., Ros., and others), or will not pay any heed to their future fate, so that they may do all they choose unpunished (Ew.). But to this Graf has justly objected, that נִסְּפָה, in all the passages that can be cited for this sense of the word, is used only of that which God sees, regards as already present, never

of that which is future. "He sees" is to be referred to the prophet. Of him the ungodly say, he shall not see their end, because they intend to put him out of the way (Hitz.); or better, in a less special sense, they ridicule the idea that his prophecies will be fulfilled, and say: He shall not see our end, because his threatenings will not come to pass.

In vers. 5 and 6 the Lord so answers the prophet's complaint as to reprove his impatience, by intimating that he will have to endure still worse. Both parts of ver. 5 are of the nature of proverbs. If even the race with footmen made him weary, how will he be able to compete with horses? תִּתְּרֶה here and xxii. 15, a Tiph., Aramaic form for Hiph., arising by the hardening of the ת into ת—cf. Hos. xi. 3, and Ew. § 122, *a*—rival, vie with. The proverb exhibits the contrast between tasks of smaller and greater difficulty, applied to the prophet's relation to his enemies. What Jeremiah had to suffer from his countrymen at Anathoth was but a trifle compared with the malign assaults that yet awaited him in the discharge of his office. The second comparison conveys the same thought, but with a clearer intimation of the dangers the prophet will undergo. If thou puttest thy trust in a peaceful land, there alone countest on living in peace and safety, how wilt thou bear thyself in the glory of Jordan? The latter phrase does not mean the swelling of Jordan, its high flood, so as that we should, with Umbr. and Ew., have here to think of the danger arising from a great and sudden inundation. It is the strip of land along the bank of the Jordan, thickly overgrown with shrubs, trees, and tall reeds, the lower valley, flooded when the river was swollen, where lions had their haunt, as in the reedy thickets of the Euphrates. Cf. v. Schubert, *Reise*, iii. S. 82; Robins. *Bibl. Researches in Palestine*, i. 535, and *Phys. Geogr. of the Holy Land*, p. 147. The "pride of the Jordan" is therefore mentioned in xlix. 19, l. 44, Zech. xi. 3, as the haunt of lions, and comes before us here as a region where men's lives were in danger. The point of the comparison is accordingly this: Thy case up till this time is, in spite of the onsets thou hast borne, to be compared to a sojourn in a peaceful land; but thou shalt come into much sorer case, where thou shalt never for a moment be sure of thy life. To illustrate this, he is told in ver. 6 that his

nearest of kin, and those dwelling under the same roof, will behave unfaithfully towards him. They will cry behind him מלא, *plena voce* (Jerome; cf. מלאו קול, iv. 5). They will cry after him, "as one cries when pursuing a thief or murderer" (Gr.). Perfectly apposite is therefore Luther's translation: They set up a hue and cry after thee. These words are not meant to be literally taken, but convey the thought, that even his nearest friends will persecute him as a malefactor. It is therefore a perverse design that seeks to find the distinction between the inhabitants of Anathoth and the brethren and housemates, in a contrast between the priests and the blood-relations. Although Anathoth was a city of the priests, the men of Anathoth need not have been all priests, since these cities were not exclusively occupied by priests.—In this reproof of the prophet there lies not merely the truth that much sorer suffering yet awaits him, but the truth besides, that the people's faithlessness and wickedness towards God and men will yet grow greater, ere the judgment of destruction fall upon Judah; for the divine long-suffering is not yet exhausted, nor has ungodliness yet fairly reached its highest point, so that the final destruction must straightway be carried out. But judgment will not tarry long. This thought is carried on in what follows.

Vers. 7-17. *The execution of the judgment on Judah and its enemies.*—As to this passage, which falls into two strophes, vers. 7-13 and vers. 14-17, Hitz., Graf, and others pronounce that it stands in no kind of connection with what immediately precedes. The connection of the two strophes with one another is, however, allowed by these commentators; while Eichh. and Dahler hold vers. 14-17 to be a distinct oracle, belonging to the time of Zedekiah, or to the seventh or eighth year of Jehoiakim. These views are bound up with an incorrect conception of the contents of the passage,—to which in the first place we must accordingly direct our attention.

Ver. 7. "I have forsaken mine house, cast out mine heritage, given the beloved of my soul into the hand of its enemies. Ver. 8. Mine heritage is become unto me as a lion in the forest, it hath lifted up its voice against me; therefore have I hated it. Ver. 9. Is mine heritage to me a speckled vulture, that

vultures are round about it? Come, gather all the beasts of the field, bring them to devour! Ver. 10. Many shepherds have destroyed my vineyard, have trodden down my ground, have made the plot of my pleasure a desolate wilderness. Ver. 11. They have made it a desolation; it mourneth around me desolate; desolated is the whole land, because none laid it to heart. Ver. 12. On all the bare-peaked heights in the wilderness are spoilers come; for a sword of Jahveh's devours from one end of the land unto the other: no peace to all flesh. Ver. 13. They have sown wheat and reaped thorns; they have worn themselves weary and accomplished nothing. So then ye shall be put to shame for your produce, because of the hot anger of Jahveh."

Ver. 14. "Thus saith Jahveh against all mine evil neighbours, that touch the heritage which I have given unto my people Israel: Behold, I pluck them out of their land, and the house of Judah will I pluck out of their midst. Ver. 15. But after I have plucked them out, I will pity them again, and bring them back, each to his heritage, and each into his land. Ver. 16. And it shall be, if they will learn the ways of my people, to swear by my name: As Jahveh liveth, as they have taught my people to swear by Baal, then they shall be built in the midst of my people. Ver. 17. But if they hearken not, I will pluck up such a nation, utterly destroying it, saith Jahveh."

Hitz. and Graf, in opposition to other commentators, will have the strophe, vers. 7-13, to be taken not as prophecy, but as a lament on the devastation which Judah, after Jehoiakim's defection from Nebuchadnezzar in the eighth year of his reign, had suffered through the war of spoliation undertaken against insurgent Judah by those neighbouring nations that had maintained their allegiance to Chaldean supremacy, 2 Kings xxiv. 2 f. In support of this, Gr. appeals to the use throughout of unconnected perfects, and to the prophecy, ver. 14 ff., joined with this description; which, he says, shows that it is something complete, existing, which is described, a state of affairs on which the prophecy is based. For although the prophet, viewing the future with the eyes of a seer as a thing present, often describes it as if it had already taken place, yet, he says, the context easily

enables us in such a case to recognise the description as prophetic, which, acc. to Graf, is not the case here. This argument is void of all force. To show that the use of unconnected perfects proves nothing, it is sufficient to note that such perfects are used in ver. 6, where Hitz. and Gr. take בְּיָדֵי and קָרָא as prophetic. So with the perfects in ver. 7. The context demands this. For though no particle attaches ver. 7 to what precedes, yet, as Graf himself alleges against Hitz., it is shown by the lack of any heading that the fragment (vers. 7-13) is "not a special, originally independent oracle;" and just as clearly, that it can by no means be (as Gr. supposes) an appendix, stuck on to the preceding in a purely external and accidental fashion. These assumptions are disproved by the contents of the fragment, which are simply an expansion of the threat of expulsion from their inheritance conveyed to the people already in xi. 14-17; an expansion which not merely points back to xi. 14-17, but which most aptly attaches itself to the reproof given to the prophet for his complaint that judgment on the ungodly was delayed (xii. 1-6); since it discloses to the prophet God's designs in regard to His people, and teaches that the judgment, though it may be delayed, will not be withheld.—Vers. 7 ff. contain sayings of God, not of the prophet, who had left his house in Anathoth, as Zwingli and Bugenhagen thought. The perfects are prophetic, *i.e.* intimate the divine decree already determined on, whose accomplishment is irrevocably fixed, and will certainly by and by take place. "My house" is neither the temple nor the land inhabited by Israel, in support whereof appeal is unjustly made to passages like Hos. viii. 1, ix. 15, Ezek. viii. 12, ix. 9; but, as is clearly shown by the parallel "mine heritage," taken in connection with what is said of the heritage in ver. 8, and by "the beloved of my soul," ver. 7, means the people of Israel, or Judah as the existing representative of the people of God (house = family); see on Hos. viii. 1. נַחֲלָה = נַחֲלָה, Deut. iv. 20, cf. Isa. xlvii. 6, xix. 25. יִרְדָּתִי, object of my soul's love, cf. xi. 15. This appellation, too, cannot apply to the land, but to the people of Israel.—Ver. 8 contains the reason why Jahveh gives up His people for a prey. It has behaved to God like a lion, *i.e.* has opposed Him fiercely like a furious beast. Therefore He must

withdraw His love. To give with the voice = to lift up the voice, as in Ps. xlv. 7, lxviii. 34. "Hate" is a stronger expression for the withdrawal of love, shown by delivering Israel into the hand of its enemies, as in Mal. i. 3. There is no reason for taking שָׂנְאֵתִי as inchoative (Hitz., I learned to hate it). The "hating" is explained fully in the following verses. In ver. 9 the meaning of הָעֵיט צִבִּי is disputed. In all other places where it occurs עֵיט means a bird of prey, cf. Isa. xlv. 11, or collective, birds of prey, Gen. xv. 11, Isa. xviii. 6, צִבִּי,

in the Rabbinical Heb. the hyæna, like the Arabic صَبَّاح or صَبَّاح. So the LXX. have rendered it; and so, too, many recent

comm., e.g. Gesen. in *thes*. But with this the asyndeton by way of connection with עֵיט does not well consist: is a bird of prey, a hyæna, mine heritage? On this ground Boch. (*Hieroz.* ii. p. 176, ed. Ros.) sought to make good the claim of עֵיט to mean "beast of prey," but without proving his case. Nor is there in biblical Heb. any sure case for צִבִּי in the meaning of hyæna; and the Rabbinical usage would appear to be founded on this interpretation of the word in the passage before us. צִבִּי,

صَبَّاح, means dip, hence dye; and so צִבִּי, Judg. v. 30, is dyed materials, in plur. parti-coloured clothes. To this meaning Jerome, Syr., and Targ. have adhered in the present case; Jerome gives *avis discolor*, whence Luther's *der sprinckligt Vogel*; Chr. B. Mich., *avis colorata*. So, and rightly, Hitz., Ew., Graf, Näg. The prophet alludes to the well-known fact of natural history, that "whenever a strange-looking bird is seen amongst the others, whether it be an owl of the night amidst the birds of day, or a bird of gay, variegated plumage amidst those of dusker hue, the others pursue the unfamiliar intruder with loud cries and unite in attacking it." Hitz., with reference to Tacit. *Ann.* vi. 28, Sueton. *Cæs.* 81, and Plin. *Hist. N.* x. 19. The question is the expression of amazement, and is assertory. לִי is *dat. ethic.*, intimating sympathetic participation (Näg.), and not to be changed, with Gr., into לִי. The next clause is also a question: are birds of prey round about it (mine heritage), *sc.* to plunder it? This, too, is meant

to convey affirmation. With it is connected the summons to the beasts of prey to gather round Judah to devour it. The words here come from Isa. lvi. 9. The beasts are emblem for enemies. הַתִּי is not first mode or perfect (Hitz.), but imperat., contracted from הַתִּי, as in Isa. xxi. 14. The same thought is, in ver. 10, carried on under a figure that is more directly expressive of the matter in hand. The perfects in vers. 10-12 are once more prophetic. The shepherds who (along with their flocks, of course) destroy the vineyard of the Lord are the kings of the heathen, Nebuchadnezzar and the kings subject to him, with their warriors. The "destroying" is expanded in a manner consistent with the figure; and here we must not fail to note the cumulation of the words and the climax thus produced. They tread down the plot of ground, turn the precious plot into a howling wilderness. With "plot of my pleasure" cf. אֶרֶץ הַמִּדְבָּר וְנִי, iii. 19.

In ver. 11 the emblematical shepherds are brought forward in the more direct form of enemy. שָׁמָּה, he (the enemy, "they" impersonal) has changed it (the plot of ground) into desolation. It mourneth עָלַי, round about me, desolated. Spoilers are come on all the bare-topped hills of the desert. מְדִבָּר is the name for such parts of the country as were suited only for rearing and pasturing cattle, like the so-called wilderness of Judah to the west of the Dead Sea. A sword of the Lord's (i.e. the war sent by Jahveh, cf. xxv. 29, vi. 25) devours the whole land from end to end; cf. xxv. 33. "All flesh" is limited by the context to all flesh in the land of Judah. בָּשָׂר in the sense of Gen. vi. 12, sinful mankind; here: the whole sinful population of Judah. For them there is no שְׁלוֹם, welfare or peace.—Ver. 13. They reap the contrary of what they have sowed. The words: wheat they have sown, thorns they reap, are manifestly of the nature of a saw or proverb; certainly not merely with the force of *meliora exspectaverant et venerunt pessima* (Jerome); for sowing corresponds not to hoping or expecting, but to doing and undertaking. Their labour brings them the reverse of what they aimed at or sought to attain. To understand the words directly of the failure of the crop, as Ven., Ros., Hitz., Graf, Näg. prefer to do, is fair neither to text nor context. To reap thorns is not = to have a bad har-

vest by reason of drought, blight, or the ravaging of enemies. The seed: wheat, the noblest grain, produces thorns, the very opposite of available fruit. And the context, too, excludes the thought of agriculture and "literal harvesting." The thought that the crop turned out a failure would be a very lame termination to a description of how the whole land was ravaged from end to end by the sword of the Lord. The verse forms a conclusion which sums up the threatening of vers. 7-12, to the effect that the people's sinful ongoingings will bring them sore suffering, instead of the good fortune they hoped for. נִהְלֵי, they have worn themselves out, exhausted their strength, and secured no profit. Thus shall ye be put to shame for your produce, ignominiously disappointed in your hopes for the issue of your labour.

Vers. 14-17. The spoilers of the Lord's heritage are also to be carried off out of their land; but after they, like Judah, have been punished, the Lord will have pity on them, and will bring them back one and all into their own land. And if the heathen, who now seduce the people of God to idolatry, learn the ways of God's people and be converted to the Lord, they shall receive citizenship amongst God's people and be built up amongst them; but if they will not do so, they shall be extirpated. Thus will the Lord manifest Himself before the whole earth as righteous judge, and through judgment secure the weal not only of Israel, but of the heathen peoples too. By this discovery of His world-plan the Lord makes so complete a reply to the prophet's murmuring concerning the prosperity of the ungodly (vers. 1-6), that from it may clearly be seen the justice of God's government on earth. Viewed thus, both strophes of the passage before us (vers. 7-17) connect themselves singularly well with vers. 1-6.—Ver. 14. The evil neighbours that lay hands on Jahveh's heritage are the neighbouring heathen nations, the Edomites, Moabites, Ammonites, Philistines, and Syrians. It does not, however, follow that this threatening has special reference to the event related in 2 Kings xxiv. 2, and that it belongs to the time of Jehoiakim. These nations were always endeavouring to assault Israel, and made use of every opportunity that seemed favourable for waging war against them and subjugating them; and not for

the first time during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, at which time it was indeed that they suffered the punishment here pronounced, of being carried away into exile. The neighbours are brought up here simply as representatives of the heathen nations, and what is said of them is true for all the heathen. The transition to the first person in *וְיָשׁוּב* is like that in xiv. 15. Jahveh is possessor of the land of Israel, and so the adjoining peoples are His neighbours. *וְיָשׁוּב*, to touch as an enemy, to attack, cf. Zech. ii. 12. I pluck the house of Judah out of their midst, *i.e.* the midst of the evil neighbours. This is understood by most commentators of the carrying of Judah into captivity, since *וְיָשׁוּב* cannot be taken in two different senses in the two corresponding clauses. For this word used of deportation, cf. 1 Kings xiv. 15. "Them," ver. 15, refers to the heathen peoples. After they have been carried forth of their land and have received their punishment, the Lord will again have compassion upon them, and will bring back each to its inheritance, its land. Here the restoration of Judah, the people of God, is assumed as a thing of course (cf. ver. 16 and xxxii. 37, 44, xxxiii. 26).—Ver. 16. If then the heathen learn the ways of the people of God. What we are to understand by this is clear from the following infinitive clause: to swear in the name of Jahveh, viz. if they adopt the worship of Jahveh (for swearing is mentioned as one of the principal utterances of a religious confession). If they do so, then shall they be built in the midst of God's people, *i.e.* incorporated with it, and along with it favoured and blessed.—Ver. 17. But they who hearken not, namely, to the invitation to take Jahveh as the true God, these shall be utterly destroyed. *וְיָשׁוּב וְיָשׁוּב*, so to pluck them out that they may perish. The promise is Messianic, cf. xvi. 19, Isa. lvi. 6 f., Mic. iv. 1-4, etc., inasmuch as it points to the end of God's way with all nations.

Chap. xiii. THE HUMILIATION OF JUDAH'S PRIDE.—The first section of this chapter contains a symbolical action which sets forth the corruptness of Judah (vers. 1-11), and shows in figurative language how the Lord will bring Judah's haughtiness to nothing (vers. 12-14). Upon the back of this comes the warning to repent, and the threatening addressed to the

king and queen, that the crown shall fall from their head, that Judah shall be carried captive, and Jerusalem dishonoured, because of their disgraceful idolatry (vers. 15-27).

Vers. 1-11. *The spoilt girdle.*—Ver. 1. "Thus spake Jahveh unto me: Go and buy thee a linen girdle, and put it upon thy loins, but into the water thou shalt not bring it. Ver. 2. So I bought the girdle, according to the word of Jahveh, and put it upon my loins. Ver. 3. Then came the word of Jahveh to me the second time, saying: Ver. 4. Take the girdle which thou hast bought, which is upon thy loins, and arise, and go to the Euphrates, and hide it there in a cleft of the rock. Ver. 5. So I went and hid it, as Jahveh had commanded me. Ver. 6. And it came to pass after many days, that Jahveh said unto me: Arise, go to the Euphrates, and bring thence the girdle which I commanded thee to hide there. Ver. 7. And I went to the Euphrates, and digged, and took the girdle from the place where I had hid it; and, behold, the girdle was marred, was good for nothing. Ver. 8. And the word of Jahveh came to me, saying: Ver. 9. Thus hath Jahveh said, After this manner will I mar the pride of Judah, the great pride of Jerusalem. Ver. 10. This evil people, which refuse to hear my words, which walk in the stubbornness of their heart, and walk after other gods, to serve them and to worship them, it shall be as this girdle which is good for nothing. Ver. 11. For as the girdle cleaves to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah, saith Jahveh; that it might be to me for a people and for a name, for a praise and for an ornament; but they hearkened not."

With regard to the symbolical action imposed on the prophet and performed by him, the question arises, whether the thing took place in outward reality, or was only an occurrence in the spirit, in the inward vision. The first view seems to be supported by the wording of the passage, namely, the twice repeated account of the prophet's journey to the Phrat on the strength of a twice repeated divine command. But on the other hand, it has been found very improbable that "Jeremiah should twice have made a journey to the Euphrates, merely to prove that a linen girdle, if it lie long in the damp, becomes

spoilt, a thing he could have done much nearer home, and which besides everybody knew without experiment" (Graf). On this ground Ros., Graf, etc., hold the matter for a parable or an allegorical tale. But this view depends for support on the erroneous assumption that the specification of the Euphrates is of no kind of importance for the matter in hand; whereas the contrary may be gathered from the four times repeated mention of the place. Nor is anything proved against the real performance of God's command by the remark, that the journey thither and back on both occasions is spoken of as if it were a mere matter of crossing a field. The Bible writers are wont to set forth such external matters in no very circumstantial way. And the great distance of the Euphrates—about 250 miles—gives us no sufficient reason for departing from the narrative as we have it before us, pointing as it does to a literal and real carrying out of God's command, and to relegate the matter to the inward region of spiritual vision, or to take the narrative for an allegorical tale.—Still less reason is to be found in arbitrary interpretations of the name, such as, after Bochart's example, have been attempted by Ven., Hitz., and Ew. The assertion that the Euphrates is called נְהַר פְּרָת everywhere else, including Jer. xvi. 2, 6, 10, loses its claim to conclusiveness from the fact that the prefaced נְהַר is omitted in Gen. ii. 14, Jer. li. 63. And even Ew. observes, that "fifty years later a prophet understood the word of the Euphrates at li. 63." Now even if li. 63 had been written by another prophet, and fifty years later (which is not the case, see on chap. I. ff.), the authority of this prophet would suffice to prove every other interpretation erroneous; even although the other attempts at interpretation had been more than the merest fancies. Ew. remarks, "It is most amazing that recent scholars (Hitz. with Ven. and Dahl.) could seriously come to adopt the conceit that פְּרָת is one and the same with אֶפְרַת (Gen. xlviii. 7), and so with Bethlehem;" and what he says is doubly relevant to his own rendering. פְּרָת, he says, is either to be understood like فَرَات, of fresh water in general, or like فَرْصَة, a place near the water, a crevice opening from the water into the land,—interpretations so far fetched as to require no serious refutation.

More important than the question as to the formal nature of the emblematical action is that regarding its meaning; on which the views of commentators are as much divided. From the interpretation in vers. 9–11 thus much is clear, that the girdle is the emblem of Israel, and that the prophet, in putting on and wearing this girdle, illustrates the relation of God to the folk of His covenant (Israel and Judah). The further significance of the emblem is suggested by the several moments of the action. The girdle does not merely belong to a man's adornment, but is that part of his clothing which he must put on when about to undertake any laborious piece of work. The prophet is to buy and put on a linen girdle. **בְּשֵׁמֶת**, linen, was the material of the priests' raiment, Ezek. xlv. 17 f., which in Ex. xxviii. 40, xxxix. 27 ff. is called **שֵׁשׁ**, white byssus, or **פָּר**, linen. The priest's girdle was not, however, white, but woven parti-coloured, after the four colours of the curtains of the sanctuary, Ex. xxviii. 40, xxxix. 29. Wool (**צֶמֶר**) is in Ezek. xlv. 18 expressly excluded, because it causes the body to sweat. The linen girdle points, therefore, to the priestly character of Israel, called to be a holy people, a kingdom of priests (Ex. xix. 6). "The purchased white girdle of linen, a man's pride and adornment, is the people bought out of Egypt, yet in its innocence as it was when the Lord bound it to Himself with the bands of love" (Umbr.). The prohibition that follows, "into water thou shalt not bring it," is variously interpreted. Chr. B. Mich. says: *forte ne maderet et facilius dein computrescat*; to the same effect Dahl., Ew., Umbr., Graf: to keep it safe from the hurtful effects of damp. A view which refutes itself; since washing does no kind of harm to the linen girdle, but rather makes it again as good as new. Thus to the point writes Näg., remarking justly at the same time, that the command not to bring the girdle into the water plainly implies that the prophet would have washed it when it had become soiled. This was not to be. The girdle was to remain dirty, and as such to be carried to the Euphrates, in order that, as Ros. and Maur. observed, it might symbolize *sordes quas contraxerit populus in dies majores, mores populi magis magisque lapsi*, and that the carrying of the soiled girdle to the Euphrates might set forth before the eyes of the people what awaited it,

after it had long been borne by God covered with the filth of its sins.—The just appreciation of this prohibition leads us easily to the true meaning of the command in ver. 4, to bring the girdle that was on his loins to the Euphrates, and there to conceal it in a cleft in the rock, where it decays. By it is signified, as Chr. B. Mich., following Jerome, observes, *populi Judaici apud Chaldaeos citra Euphratem captivitas et exilium*. Graf has objected: "The corruptness of Israel was not a consequence of the Babylonish captivity; the latter, indeed, came about in consequence of the existing corruptness." But this objection stands and falls with the amphibolia of the word corruptness, decay. Israel was, indeed, morally decayed before the exile; but the mouldering of the girdle in the earth by the Euphrates signifies not the moral but the physical decay of the covenant people, which, again, was a result of the moral decay of the period during which God had, in His long-suffering, borne the people notwithstanding their sins. Wholly erroneous is the view adopted by Gr. from Umbr.: the girdle decayed by the water is the sin-stained people which, intriguing with the foreign gods, had in its pride cast itself loose from its God, and had for long imagined itself secure under the protection of the gods of Chaldea. The hiding of the girdle in the crevice of a rock by the banks of the Euphrates would have been the most unsuitable emblem conceivable for representing the moral corruption of the people. Had the girdle, which God makes to decay by the Euphrates, loosed itself from him and imagined it could conceal itself in a foreign land? as Umbr. puts the case. According to the declaration, ver. 9, God will mar the great pride of Judah and Jerusalem, even as the girdle had been marred, which had at His command been carried to the Euphrates and hid there. The carrying of the girdle to the Euphrates is an act proceeding from God, by which Israel is marred; the intriguing of Israel with strange gods in the land of Canaan was an act of Israel's own, against the will of God.—Ver. 6. After the course of many days—these are the seventy years of the captivity—the prophet is to fetch the girdle again. He went, digged (קָפַר, whence we see that the hiding in the cleft of the rock was a burying in the rocky soil of the Euphrates bank), and found the girdle marred, fit for nothing.

These words correspond to the effect which the exile was designed to have, which it has had, on the wicked, idolatrous race. The ungodly should, as Moses' law, Lev. xxvi. 36, 39, declared, perish in the land of their enemies; the land of their enemies will devour them, and they that remain shall pine or moulder away in their iniquities and in the iniquities of their fathers. This mouldering (יִפְּסוּ) is well reproduced in the marring (נִשְׁחַת) of the girdle. It is no contradiction to this, that a part of the people will be rescued from the captivity and brought back to the land of their fathers. For although the girdle which the prophet had put on his loins symbolized the people at large, yet the decay of the same at the Euphrates sets forth only the physical decay of the ungodly part of the people, as ver. 10 intimates in clear words: "This evil people that refuses to hear the word of the Lord, etc., shall be as this girdle." The Lord will mar the נִסָּה of Judah and Jerusalem. The word means highness in both a good and in an evil sense, glory and self-glory. Here it is used with the latter force. This is shown both by the context, and by a comparison of the passage Lev. xxvi. 19, that God will break the יִסָּה of the people by sore judgments, which is the foundation of the present ver. 9.—In ver. 11 the meaning of the girdle is given, in order to explain the threatening in vers. 9 and 10. As the girdle lies on the loins of a man, so the Lord hath laid Israel on Himself, that it may be to Him for a people and for a praise, for a glory and an adornment, inasmuch as He designed to set it above all other nations and to make it very glorious; cf. Deut. xxvi. 19, whither these words point back.

Vers. 12–17. *How the Lord will destroy His degenerate people, and how they may yet escape the impending ruin.*—Ver. 12. "And speak unto them this word: Thus hath Jahveh the God of Israel said, Every jar is filled with wine. And when they say to thee, Know we not that every jar is filled with wine? Ver. 13. Then say to them: Thus hath Jahveh said: Behold, I fill all inhabitants of this land—the kings that sit for David upon his throne, and the priests, and the prophets, and all inhabitants of Jerusalem—with drunkenness, Ver. 14. And dash them one against another, the fathers and the sons together, saith Jahveh; I will not spare, nor pity, nor have mercy, not to destroy them.

—Ver. 15. Hear ye and give ear! Be not proud, for Jahveh speaketh. Ver. 16. Give to Jahveh, your God, honour, ere He bring darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the mountains of dusk, and ye look for light, but He turn it into the shadow of death and make it darkness. Ver. 17. But if ye hear it not, then in concealment shall my soul weep for the pride, and weep and run down shall mine eye with tears, because the flock of Jahveh is carried away captive.”

To give emphasis to the threatening conveyed in the symbolical action, the kind and manner of the destruction awaiting them is forcibly set before the various ranks in Judah and Jerusalem by the interpretation, in vers. 12-14, of a proverbial saying and the application of it to them. The circumstantial way in which the figurative saying is brought in in ver. 12, is designed to call attention to its import. כֶּלִי, an earthenware vessel, especially the wine jar (cf. Isa. xxx. 24, Lam. iv. 2), is here the emblem of man; cf. xviii. 6, Isa. xxix. 16. We must not, as Näg. does, suppose the simile to be used because such jars are an excellent emblem of that carnal aristocratic pride which lacked all substantial merit, by reason of their being of bulging shape, hollow within and without solidity, and of fragile material besides. No stress is laid on the bulging form and hollowness of the jars, but only on their fulness with wine and their brittleness. Nor can aristocratic haughtiness be predicated of all the inhabitants of the land. The saying: Every jar is filled with wine, seemed so plain and natural, that those addressed answer: Of that we are well aware. “The answer is that of the psychical man, who dreams of no deeper sense” (Hitz.). Just this very answer gives the prophet occasion to expound the deeper meaning of this word of God’s. As one fills all wine jars, so must all inhabitants of the land be filled by God with wine of intoxication. Drunkenness is the effect of the intoxicating wine of God’s wrath, Ps. lx. 5. This wine Jahveh will give them (cf. xxv. 15, Isa. li. 17, etc.), so that, filled with drunken frenzy, they shall helplessly destroy one another. This spirit will seize upon all ranks: upon the kings who sit upon the throne of David, not merely him who was reigning at the time; upon the priests and prophets as leaders of the people; and upon all inhabitants of Jerusalem, the metropolis,

the spirit and temper of which exercises an unlimited influence upon the temper and destiny of the kingdom at large. I dash them one against the other, as jars are shivered when knocked together. Here Hitz. finds a foreshadowing of civil war, by which they should exterminate one another. Jeremiah was indeed thinking of the staggering against one another of drunken men, but in "dash them," etc., adhered simply to the figure of jars or pots. But what can be meant by the shivering of pots knocked together, other than mutual destruction? The kingdom of Judah did not indeed fall by civil war; but who can deny that the fury of the various factions in Judah and Jerusalem did really contribute to the fall of the realm? The shattering of the pots does not mean directly civil war; it is given as the result of the drunkenness of the inhabitants, under which they, no longer capable of self-control, dash against and so destroy one another. But besides, the breaking of jars reminds us of the stratagem of Gideon and his 300 warriors, who, by the sound of trumpets and the smashing of jars, threw the whole Midianite camp into such panic, that these foes turned their swords against one another and fled in wild confusion: Judg. vii. 19 ff., cf. too 1 Sam. xiv. 20. Thus shall Judah be broken without mercy or pity. To increase the emphasis, there is a cumulation of expressions, as in xxi. 7, xv. 5, cf. Ezek. v. 11, vii. 4, 9, etc.—Ver. 15 ff. With this threatening the prophet couples a solemn exhortation not to leave the word of the Lord unheeded in their pride, but to give God the glory, ere judgment fall on them. To give God the glory is, in this connection, to acknowledge His glory by confession of apostasy from Him and by returning to Him in sincere repentance; cf. Josh. vii. 19, Mal. ii. 2. "Your God," who has attested Himself to you as God. The Hiph. יִשְׁמַח is not used intransitively, either here or in Ps. cxxxix. 12, but transitively: before He brings or makes darkness; cf. Amos viii. 9. Mountains of dusk, *i.e.* mountains shrouded in dusk, are the emblem of unseen stumbling-blocks, on which one stumbles and falls. Light and darkness are well-known emblems of prosperity and adversity, welfare and misery. The suffix in שְׁמָהּ goes with אֵר, which is construed feminine here as in Job xxxvi. 32. Shadow of death = deep darkness; עֲרֵפֶל,

cloudy night, *i.e.* dark night. The *Chet.* יָשִׁיחַ is *imperf.*, and to be read יָשִׁיחַ; the *Keri* יָשִׁיחַ is uncalled for and incorrect.—Ver. 17. Knowing their obstinacy, the prophet adds: if ye hear it (what I have declared to you) not, my soul shall weep. In the concealment, *quo secedere lugentes amant, ut impensius flere possint* (Chr. B. Mich.). For the pride, *sc.* in which ye persist. With tears mine eye shall run down because the flock of Jahveh, *i.e.* the people of God (cf. Zech. x. 3), is carried away into captivity (*perfect. proph.*).

Vers. 18-27. *The fall of the kingdom, the captivity of Judah, with upbraidings against Jerusalem for her grievous guilt in the matter of idolatry.*—Ver. 18. "Say unto the king and to the sovereign lady: Sit you low down, for from your heads falls the crown of your glory. Ver. 19. The cities of the south are shut and no man openeth; Judah is carried away captive all of it, wholly carried away captive. Ver. 20. Lift up your eyes and behold them that come from midnight! Where is the flock that was given thee, thy glorious flock? Ver. 21. What wilt thou say, if He set over thee those whom thou hast accustomed to thee as familiar friends, for a head? Shall not sorrows take thee, as a woman in travail? 22. And if thou say in thine heart, Wherefore cometh this upon me? for the plenty of thine iniquity are thy skirts uncovered, thy heels abused. Ver. 23. Can an Ethiopian change his skin, and a leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good that are accustomed to doing evil. Ver. 24. Therefore will I scatter them like chaff that flies before the wind of the wilderness. Ver. 25. This is thy lot, thine apportioned inheritance from me, because thou hast forgotten me and trustedst in falsehood. Ver. 26. Therefore will I turn thy skirts over thy face, that thy shame be seen. Ver. 27. Thine adultery and thy neighing, the crime of thy whoredom upon the hills, in the fields, I have seen thine abominations. Woe unto thee, Jerusalem! thou shalt not be made clean after how long a time yet!"

From ver. 18 on the prophet's discourse is addressed to the king and the queen-mother. The latter as such exercised great influence on the government, and is in the Books of Kings mentioned alongside of almost all the reigning kings (cf. 1 Kings xv. 13, 2 Kings x. 13, etc.); so that we are not necessarily led

to think of Jechoniah and his mother in especial. To them he proclaims the loss of the crown and the captivity of Judah. Set yourselves low down (cf. Gesen. § 142, 3, *b*), *i.e.* descend from the throne; not in order to turn aside the threatening danger by humiliation, but, as the reason that follows shows, because the kingdom is passing from you. For fallen is **מִרְאֲשֵׁיכֶם**, your head-gear, lit. what is about or on your head (elsewhere pointed **מִרְאֲשֵׁי**, 1 Sam. xix. 13, xxvi. 7), namely, your splendid crown. The perf. here is prophetic. The crown falls when the king loses country and kingship. This is put expressly in ver. 19. The meaning of the first half of the verse, which is variously taken, may be gathered from the second. In the latter the complete deportation of Judah is spoken of as an accomplished fact, because it is as sure to happen as if it had taken place already. Accordingly the first clause cannot bespeak expectation merely, or be understood, as it is by Grotius, as meaning that Judah need hope for no help from Egypt. This interpretation is irreconcilable with "the cities of the south." "The south" is the south country of Judah, cf. Josh. x. 40, Gen. xiii. 1, etc., and is not to be taken according to the prophetic use of "king of the south," Dan. xi. 5, 9. The shutting of the cities is not to be taken, with Jerome, of siege by the enemy, as in Josh. vi. 1. There the closedness is otherwise illustrated: No man was going out or in; here, on the other hand, it is: No man openeth. "Shut" is to be explained according to Isa. xxiv. 10: the cities are shut up by reason of ruins which block up the entrances to them; and in them is none that can open, because all Judah is utterly carried away. The cities of the south are mentioned, not because the enemy, avoiding the capital, had first brought the southern part of the land under his power, as Sennacherib had once advanced against Jerusalem from the south, 2 Kings xviii. 13 f., xix. 8 (Graf, Näg., etc.), but because they were the part of the kingdom most remote for an enemy approaching from the north; so that when they were taken, the land was reduced and the captivity of all Judah accomplished. For the form **הַנָּגֶלֶת** see Ew. § 194, *a*, Ges. § 75, Rem. 1. **שְׁלֹמִים** is adverbial accusative: in entirety, like **מִיִּשְׁרָיִם**, Ps. lviii. 2, etc. For this cf. **נְלִיזָה**, **שְׁלָמָה**, Amos i. 6, 9.

The announcement of captivity is carried on in ver. 20, where we have first an account of the impression which the carrying away captive will produce upon Jerusalem (vers. 20 and 21), and next a statement of the cause of that judgment (vers. 22-27). In אִשָּׁה and אִשָּׁה a feminine is addressed, and, as appears from the suffix in עַיִינֶיךָ, one which is collective. The same holds good of the following verses on to ver. 27, where Jerusalem is named, doubtless the inhabitants of it, personified as the daughter of Zion—a frequent case. Näg. is wrong in supposing that the feminines in ver. 20 are called for by the previously mentioned queen-mother, that vers. 20-22 are still addressed to her, and that not till ver. 23 is there a transition from her in the address to the nation taken collectively and regarded as the mother of the country. The contents of ver. 20 do not tally with Näg.'s view; for the queen-mother was not the reigning sovereign, so that the inhabitants of the land could have been called her flock, however great was the influence she might exercise upon the king. The mention of foes coming from the north, and the question coupled therewith: Where is the flock? convey the thought that the flock is carried off by those enemies. The flock is the flock of Jahveh (ver. 17), and, in virtue of God's choice of it, a herd of gloriousness. The relative clause: "that was given thee," implies that the person addressed is to be regarded as the shepherd or owner of the flock. This will not apply to the capital and its citizens; for the influence exerted by the capital in the country is not so great as to make it appear the shepherd or lord of the people. But the relative clause is in good keeping with the idea of the daughter of Zion, with which is readily associated that of ruler of land and people. It intimates the suffering that will be endured by the daughter of Zion when those who have been hitherto her paramours are set up as head over her. The verse is variously explained. The old transll. and comm. take פָּקַד עָלַי in the sense of visit, chastise; so too Chr. B. Mich. and Ros.; and Ew. besides, who alters the text acc. to the LXX., changing פָּקַד into the plural פָּקְדוּ. For this change there is no sufficient reason; and without such change, the signif. visit, punish, gives us no suitable sense. The phrase means also: to appoint or set over

anybody; cf. *e.g.* xv. 3. The subject can only be Jahveh. The words from וְאַתָּה onwards form an adversative circumstantial clause: and yet thou hast accustomed them עָלֶיךָ, for אֵלֶיךָ, to thee (cf. for לְמַד c. לֵא, x. 2). The connection of the words שִׁלְחָם לְרֹאשֵׁי depends upon the sig. assigned to אֲלֵפִים. Gesen. (*thes.*) and Ros. still adhere to the meaning taken by Luther, Vat., and many others, viz. *principes*, princes, taking for the sense of the whole: whom thou hast accustomed (trained) to be princes over thee. This word is indeed the technical term for the old Edomitish chieftains of clans, Gen. xxxvi. 15 ff., and is applied as an archaic term by Zech. ix. 7 to the tribal princes of Judah; but it does not, as a general rule, mean prince, but familiar, friend, Ps. lv. 14, Prov. xvi. 28, Mic. vii. 5; cf. Jer. xi. 19. This being the well-attested signification, it is, in the first place, not competent to render עָלֶיךָ *over* or *against* thee (*adversus te*, Jerome); and Hitz.'s exposition: thou hast instructed them to thy hurt, hast taught them a disposition hostile to thee, cannot be justified by usage. In the second place, אֲלֵפִים cannot be attached to the principal clause, "set over thee," and joined with "for a head:" if He set over thee—as princes for a head; but it belongs to "hast accustomed," while only "for a head" goes with "if He set" (as de Wet., Umbr., Näg., etc., construe). The prophet means the heathen kings, for whose favour Judah had hitherto been intriguing, the Babylonians and Egyptians. There is no cogent reason for referring the words, as many comm. do, to the Babylonians alone. For the statement is quite general throughout; and, on the one hand, Judah had, from the days of Ahaz on, courted the alliance not of the Babylonians alone, but of the Egyptians too (cf. ii. 18); and, on the other hand, after the death of Josiah, Judah had become subject to Egypt, and had had to endure the grievous domination of the Pharaohs, as Jeremiah had threatened, ii. 16. If God deliver the daughter of Zion into the power of these her paramours, *i.e.* if she be subjected to their rule, then will grief and pain seize on her as on a woman in childbirth; cf. vi. 24, xxii. 23, etc. אִשְׁתִּי לִירָה, woman of bearing; so here only, elsewhere יִלְדָה (cf. the passages cited); לִירָה is *infin.*, as in Isa. xxxvii. 3, 2 Kings xix. 3, Hos. ix. 11.—Ver. 22. This will befall the daughter of Zion for her sore transgressions.

Therefore will she be covered with scorn and shame. The manner of her dishonour, discovery of the skirts (here and esp. in ver. 26), recalls Nah. iii. 5, cf. Isa. xlvii. 3, Hos. ii. 5. Chr. B. Mich. and others understand the violent treatment of the heels to be the loading of the feet with chains; but the mention of heels is not in keeping with this. Still less can the exposure of the heels by the upturning of the skirts be called maltreatment of the heels; nor can it be that, as Hitz. holds, the affront is simply specialized by the mention of the heels instead of the person. The thing can only mean, that the person will be driven forth into exile barefoot and with violence, perhaps under the rod; cf. Ps. lxxxix. 52.—Ver. 23. Judah will not escape this ignominious lot, since wickedness has so grown to be its nature, that it can as little cease therefrom and do good, as an Ethiopian can wash out the blackness of his skin, or a panther change its spots. The consequential clause introduced by **וְאִם יִהְיֶה כֵּן** connects with the possibility suggested in, but denied by, the preceding question: if that could happen, then might even ye do good. The one thing is as impossible as the other. And so the Lord must scatter Judah among the heathen, like stubble swept away by the desert wind, lit. passing by with the desert wind. The desert wind is the strong east wind that blows from the Arabian Desert; see on iv. 11.

In ver. 25 the discourse draws to a conclusion in such a way that, after a repetition of the manner in which Jerusalem prepares for herself the doom announced, we have again, in brief and condensed shape, the disgrace that is to befall her. This shall be thy lot. Hitz. renders **חֵלֶק מְדִינָה**: portion of thy garment, that is allotted for the swelling folds of thy garment (cf. Ruth iii. 15, 2 Kings iv. 39), on the ground that **מֶרֶס** never means *mensura*, but garment only. This is, however, no conclusive argument; since so many words admit of two plural forms, so that **מְדִינִים** might be formed from **מְדִינָה**; and since so many are found in the singular in the forms of both genders, so that, alongside of **מְדִינָה**, **מֶרֶס** might also be used in the sense of *mensura*; especially as both the signiff. measure and garment are derived from the same root meaning of **מָדַר**. We therefore adhere to the usual rendering, *portio mensuræ tuæ*, the share portioned out to thee. **וְאֵשֶׁר**, causal, *because*. Trusted in false-

hood, *i.e.* both in delusive promises (vii. 4, 8) and in the help of beingless gods (xvi. 19).—In the *וְנִסִּי* lies the force of reciprocation: because thou hast forgotten me, etc., I too have taken means to make retribution on your unthankfulness (Calv.). The threatening of this verse is word for word from Nah. iii. 5.—For her lewd idolatry Jerusalem shall be carried off like a harlot amid mockery and disgrace. In ver. 27 the language is cumulative, to lay as great stress as possible on Jerusalem's idolatrous ongoing. Thy lewd neighing, *i.e.* thy ardent longing for and running after strange gods; cf. v. 8, ii. 24 f. *נִסָּה*, as in Ezek. xvi. 27, xxii. 9, etc., of the crime of uncleanness, see on Lev. xviii. 17. The three words are accusatives dependent on *רָאִיתִי*, though separated from it by the specification of place, and therefore summed up again in "thine abominations." The addition: in the field, after "upon the hills," is meant to make more prominent the publicity of the idolatrous work. The concluding sentence: thou shalt not become clean for how long a time yet, is not to be regarded as contradictory of ver. 23, which affirms that the people is beyond the reach of reformation; ver. 23 is not a hyperbolic statement, reduced within its true limits here. What is said in ver. 23 is true of the present generation, which cleaves immoveably to wickedness. It does not exclude the possibility of a future reform on the part of the people, a purification of it from idolatry. Only this cannot be attained for a long time, until after sore and long-lasting, purifying judgments. Cf. xii. 14 f., iii. 18 ff.

CHAP. XIV.—XVII.—THE WORD CONCERNING THE DROUGHTS.

The distress arising from a lengthened drought (xiv. 2–6) gives the prophet occasion for urgent prayer on behalf of his people (xiv. 7–9 and 19–22); but the Lord rejects all intercession, and gives the people notice, for their apostasy from Him, of their coming destruction by sword, famine, and pestilence (xiv. 10–18 and xv. 1–9). Next, the prophet complains of the persecution he has to endure, and is corrected by the Lord and comforted (xv. 10–21). Then he has his course of conduct for the future prescribed to him, since Judah is, for its

sins, to be cast forth into banishment, but is again to be restored (xvi. 1—xvii. 4). And the discourse concludes with general considerations upon the roots of the mischief, together with prayers for the prophet's safety, and statements as to the way by which judgment may be turned aside.

This prophetic word, though it had its origin in a special period of distress, does not contain any single discourse such as may have been delivered by Jeremiah before the people upon occasion of this calamity, but is, like the former sections, a summary of addresses and utterances concerning the corruption of the people, and the bitter experiences to which his office exposes the prophet. For these matters the special event above mentioned serves as a starting-point, inasmuch as the deep moral degradation of Judah, which must draw after it yet sorer judgments, is displayed in the relation assumed by the people to the judgment sent on them at that time.—The various attempts of recent commentators to dissect the passage into single portions, and to assign these to special points of time and to refer them to particular historical occurrences, have proved an entire failure, as Graf himself admits. The whole discourse moves in the same region of thought and adheres to the same aspect of affairs as the preceding ones, without suggesting special historical relations. And there is an advance made in the prophetic declaration, only in so far as here the whole substance of the discourse culminates in the thought that, because of Judah's being hardened in sin, the judgment of rejection can now in no way be turned aside, not even by the intercession of those whose prayers would have the greatest weight.

Chap. xiv. 1—xv. 9. THE USELESSNESS OF PRAYER ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE.—The title in ver. 1 specifies the occasion for the following discourse: *What came as word of Jahveh to Jeremiah concerning the drought.*—Besides here, **אֲשֶׁר הָיָה** is made to precede the **דְּבַר יְהוָה** in xlvi. 1, xlvii. 1, xlix. 34; and so, by a kind of attraction, the prophecy which follows receives an outward connection with that which precedes. Concerning the matters of the droughts. **בְּצָרוֹת**, plur. of **בְּצָרָה**, Ps. ix. 10, x. 1, might mean harassments, troubles in general. But the description of a great drought, with which the prophecy begins,

taken along with xvii. 8, where *בַּצָּרָה* occurs, meaning drought, lit. cutting off, restraint of rain, shows that the plural here is to be referred to the sing. *בַּצָּרָה* (cf. *עֲשֵׂתָרָה* from *עֲשָׂרָה*), and that it means the withholding of rain or drought (as freq. in Chald.). We must note the plur., which is not to be taken as intensive of a great drought, but points to repeated droughts. Withdrawal of rain was threatened as a judgment against the despisers of God's word (Lev. xxvi. 19 f.; Deut. xi. 17, xxviii. 23); and this chastisement has at various times been inflicted on the sinful people; cf. iii. 3, xii. 4, xxiii. 10, Hag. i. 10 f. As the occasion of the present prophecy, we have therefore to regard not a single great drought, but a succession of droughts. Hence we cannot fix the time at which the discourse was composed, since we have no historical notices as to the particular times at which God was then punishing His people by withdrawing the rain.

Vers. 2-6. *Description of the distress arising from the drought.*—Ver. 2. "Judah mourneth, and the gates thereof languish, lie mourning on the ground, and the cry of Jerusalem goeth up. Ver. 3. Their nobles send their mean ones for water: they come to the wells, find no water, return with empty pitchers, are ashamed and confounded and cover their head. Ver. 4. For the ground, which is confounded, because no rain is fallen upon the earth, the husbandmen are ashamed, cover their head. Ver. 5. Yea, the hind also in the field, she beareth and forsaketh it, because there is no grass. Ver. 6. And the wild asses stand on the bare-topped heights, gasp for air like the jackals; their eyes fail because there is no herb."

The country and the city, the distinguished and the mean, the field and the husbandmen, are thrown into deep mourning, and the beasts of the field pine away because neither grass nor herb grows. This description gives a touching picture of the distress into which the land and its inhabitants have fallen for lack of rain. Judah is the kingdom or the country with its inhabitants; the gates as used poetically for the cities with the citizens. Not mankind only, but the land itself mourns and pines away, with all the creatures that live on it; cf. ver. 4, where the ground is said to be dismayed along with the tillers of it. The gates of the cities are mentioned as being the places

where the citizens congregate. אָמַל, fade away, pine, is strengthened by: are black, *i.e.* mourn, down to the earth; pregnant for: set themselves mourning on the ground. As frequently, Jerusalem is mentioned alongside of Judah as being its capital. Their cry of anguish rises up to heaven. This universal mourning is specialized from ver. 3 on. Their nobles, *i.e.* the distinguished men of Judah and Jerusalem, send their mean ones, *i.e.* their retainers or servants and maids, for water to the wells (בְּרִים, pits, 2 Kings iii. 16, here cisterns). The *Chet.* צָעִיר, here and in xlviii. 4, is an unusual form for צִיָּר, *Keri.* Finding no water, they return, their vessels empty, *i.e.* with empty pitchers, ashamed of their disappointed hope. בָּשָׁר is strengthened by the synonym הִכְלִימוּ. Covering the head is a token of deep grief turned inwards upon itself; cf. 2 Sam. xv. 30, xix. 5. הָאֲדָמָה is the ground generally. הִתְחַה is a relative clause: *quæ consternata est*. "Because no rain," etc., literally as in 1 Kings xvii. 7.—Even the beasts droop and perish. כִּי is intensive: yea, even. The hind brings forth and forsakes, *sc.* the new-born offspring, because for want of grass she cannot sustain herself and her young. עָוֹב, *infin. abs.* set with emphasis for the *temp. fin.*, as Gen. xli. 43, Ex. viii. 11, and often; cf. Gesen. § 131, 4, *a*, Ew. § 351, *c*. The hind was regarded by the ancients as tenderly caring for her young, cf. Boch. *Hieroz.* i. lib. 3, c. 17 (ii. p. 254, ed. Ros.). The wild asses upon the bleak mountain-tops, where these animals choose to dwell, gasp for air, because, by reason of the dreadful drought, it is not possible to get a breath of air even on the hills. Like the תַּיִם, jackals, cf. ix. 10, x. 22, etc. *Vulg.* has *dracones*, with the Aram. versions; and Hitz. and Graf are of opinion that the mention of jackals is not here in point, and that, since תַּיִם does not mean *dracones*, the word stands here, as in Ex. xxix. 3, xxxii. 2, for תַּיִן, the monster inhabiting the water, a crocodile or some kind of whale that stretches its head out of the water to draw breath with gaping jaws. On this Näg. has well remarked: he cannot see why the gaping, panting jaws of the jackal should not serve as a figure in such a case as the present. Their eyes fail away—from exhaustion due to want of water. עֲשֻׁב, bushes and under-shrubs, as distinguished from יֵרֵק, green grass.

Vers. 7-9. *The prayer.*—Ver. 7. “If our iniquities testify against us, O Jahveh, deal Thou for Thy name’s sake, for many are our backslidings; against Thee have we sinned. Ver. 8. Thou hope of Israel, his Saviour in time of need, why wilt Thou be as a stranger in the land, like a wayfarer that hath put up to tarry for a night? Ver. 9. Why wilt Thou be as a man astonished, as a mighty man that cannot help, and yet Thou art in the midst of us, Jahveh, and Thy name is named upon us—O leave us not!”

The prophet utters this prayer in the name of his people (cf. ver. 11). It begins with confession of sore transgression. Thus the chastisement which has befallen them they have deserved as a just punishment; but the Lord is besought to help for His name’s sake, *i.e.* not: “for the sake of Thy honour, with which it is not consistent that contempt of Thy will should go unpunished” (Hitz.). This interpretation suits neither the idea of the name of God nor the context. The name of God is the manifestation of God’s being. From Moses’ time on, God, as *Jahveh*, has revealed Himself as the Redeemer and Saviour of the children of Israel, whom He had adopted to be His people, and as God, who is merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and of great goodness and faithfulness (Ex. xxxiv. 6). As such He is besought to reveal Himself now that they confess their backsliding and sin, and seek His grace. Not for the sake of His honour in the eyes of the world, lest the heathen believe He has no power to help, as Graf holds, for all reference to the heathen nations is foreign to this connection; but He is entreated to help, not to belie the hope of His people, because Israel sets its hope in Him as Saviour in time of need (ver. 9). If by withholding rain He makes His land and people to pine, then He does not reveal Himself as the lord and owner of Judah, not as the God that dwells amidst His people; but He seems a stranger passing through the land, who sets up His tent there only to spend the night, who “feels no share in the weal and woe of the dwellers therein” (Hitz.). This is the meaning of the question in ver. 8b. The ancient expositors take נָתַח elliptically, as in Gen. xii. 8: that stretches out His tent to pass the night. Hitz., again, objects that the wayfarer does not drag a tent about with him, and, like Ew., takes this

verb in the sense of swerve from the direct route, cf. 2 Sam. ii. 19, 21, etc. But the reason alleged is not tenable; since travellers did often carry their tents with them, and נָפַת, to turn oneself, is not used absolutely in the sig. to turn aside from the way, without the qualification: to the right or to the left. סוּר is in use for to turn aside to tarry, to turn in, Jer. xv. 5. We therefore abide by the old interpretation, since "swerve from the way" has here no suitable meaning.—Ver. 9. The pleader makes further appeal to God's almighty power. It is impossible that Jahveh can let Himself look like a man at his wit's end or a nerveless warrior, as He would seem to be if He should not give help to His people in their present need. Since the time of A. Schultens the ἀπ. λεγ. נִרְדָּם is rendered, after the Arab. دَهَمٌ, to make an unforeseen attack, by *stupefactus*, *attonitus*, one who, by reason of a sudden mischance, has lost his presence of mind and is helpless. This is in keeping with the next comparison, that with a warrior who has no strength to help. The passage closes with an appeal to the relation of grace which Jahveh sustains towards His people. יִצְחָק comes in adversatively: yet art Thou in our midst, i.e. present to Thy people. Thy name is named upon us, i.e. Thou hast revealed Thyself to us in Thy being as God of salvation; see on vii. 10. אֶל-תִּפְחָתֵנוּ, lit. lay us not down, i.e. let us not sink.

Vers. 10-18. *The Lord's answer*.—Ver. 10. "Thus saith Jahveh unto this people: Thus they loved to wander, their feet they kept not back; and Jahveh hath no pleasure in them, now will He remember their iniquities and visit their sins. Ver. 11. And Jahveh hath said unto me: Pray not for this people for their good. Ver. 12. When they fast, I hear not their cry; and when they bring burnt-offering and meat-offering, I have no pleasure in them; but by sword, and famine, and pestilence will I consume them. Ver. 13. Then said I: Ah Lord Jahveh, behold, the prophets say to them, Ye shall see no sword, and famine shall not befall you, but assured peace give I in this place. Ver. 14. And Jahveh said unto me: Lies do the prophets prophesy in my name: I have not sent them, nor commanded them, nor spoken to them; lying vision, and divination, and a thing of nought, and deceit of their heart they

prophecy to you. Ver. 15. Therefore thus saith Jahveh concerning the prophets that prophesy in my name, when I have not sent them, who yet say, Sword and famine shall not be in this land: By sword and famine shall these prophets perish. Ver. 16. And the people to whom they prophesy shall lie cast out upon the streets of Jerusalem, by reason of the famine and of the sword, and none will bury them, them and their wives, their sons and their daughters; and I pour their wickedness upon them. Ver. 17. And thou shalt say to them this word: Let mine eyes run down with tears day and night and let them not cease; for with a great breach is broken the virgin-daughter of my people, with a very grievous blow. Ver. 18. If I go forth into the field, behold the slain with the sword; and if I come into the city, behold them that pine with famine; for prophet and priest pass into a land and know it not."

To the prophet's prayer the Lord answers in the first place, ver. 10, by pointing to the backsliding of the people, for which He is now punishing them. In the "*thus they love*," etc., lies a backward reference to what precedes. The reference is certainly not to the vain going for water (ver. 3), as Ch. B. Mich. and R. Salomo Haccohen thought it was; nor is it to the description of the animals afflicted by thirst, vers. 5 and 6, in which Næg. finds a description of the passionate, unbridled lust after idolatry, the real and final cause of the ruin that has befallen Israel. Where could be the likeness between the wild ass's panting for breath and the wandering of the Jews? That to which the "*thus*" refers must be sought for in the body of the prayer to which Jahveh makes answer, as Ros. rightly saw. Not by any means in the fact that in ver. 9 the Jews prided themselves on being the people of God and yet went after false gods, so that God answered: *ita amant vacillare*, as good as to say: *ita instabiles illos esse, ut nunc ab ipso, nunc ab aliis auxilium quærant* (Ros.); for נָעַג cannot here mean the waving and swaying of reeds, but only the wandering after other gods, cf. ii. 23, 31. This is shown by the addition: they kept not back their feet, cf. with ii. 25, where in the same reference the withholding of the feet is enjoined. Graf is right in referring *thus* to the preceding prayer: "*Thus*, in the same degree as Jahveh has estranged Himself from His people (cf. vers. 8

and 9), have they estranged themselves from their God." They loved to wander after strange gods, and so have brought on themselves God's displeasure. Therefore punishment comes on them. The second clause of the verse is a reminiscence of Hos. viii. 13.—After mentioning the reason why He punishes Judah, the Lord in ver. 11 f. rejects the prayer of the prophet, because He will not hear the people's cry to Him. Neither by means of fasts nor sacrifice will they secure God's pleasure. The prophet's prayer implies that the people will humble themselves and turn to the Lord. Hence God explains His rejection of the prayer by saying that He will give no heed to the people's fasting and sacrifices. The reason of this appears from the context,—namely, because they turn to Him only in their need, while their heart still cleaves to the idols, so that their prayers are but lip-service, and their sacrifices a soulless formality. The suffix in רָצוֹן refers not to the sacrifices, but, like that in רָצוֹן, to the Jews who, by bringing sacrifices, seek to win God's love. וְ, but, introducing the antithesis to "have no pleasure in them." The sword in battle, famine, and pestilence, at the siege of the cities, are the three means by which God designs to destroy the backsliding people; cf. Lev. xxvi. 25 f.

In spite of the rejection of his prayer, the prophet endeavours yet again to entreat God's favour for the people, laying stress, ver. 13, on the fact that they had been deceived and confirmed in their infatuation by the delusive forecastings of the false prophets who promised peace. Peace of truth, *i.e.* peace that rests on God's faithfulness, and so: assured peace will I give you. Thus spoke these prophets in the name of Jahveh; cf. on this iv. 10, v. 12. Hitz. and Graf propose to change שְׁלוֹם into שְׁלוֹם וְאַמֶּת, acc. to xxxiii. 6 and Isa. xxxix. 8, because the LXX. have ἀλήθειαν καὶ εἰρήνην. But none of the passages cited furnishes sufficient ground for this. In xxxiii. 6 the LXX. have rendered εἰρήνην καὶ πίστιν, in Isa. xxxix. 8, εἰρήνην καὶ δικαιοσύνην; giving thereby a clear proof that we cannot draw from their rendering any certain inferences as to the precise words of the original text. Nor do the parallels prove anything, since in them the expression often varies in detail. But there can be no doubt that in the mouth of the pseudo-prophets "assured peace" is more natural than "peace

and truth." But the Lord does not allow this excuse. He has not sent the prophets that so prophesy: they prophesy lying vision, divination, falsehood, and deceit, and shall themselves be destroyed by sword and famine. The cumulation of the words, "lying vision," etc., shows God's wrath and indignation at the wicked practices of these men. Graf wants to delete לֵב before אֱלֹהִים , and to couple אֱלֹהִים with קֶסֶם , so as to make one idea: prophecy of nought. For this he can allege none other than the erroneous reason that קֶסֶם , taken by itself, does not sufficiently correspond to "lying vision," inasmuch as, he says, it has not always a bad sense attached to it; whereas the fact is that it is nowhere used for genuine prophecy. The *Chet.* אֱלֹהִים and תְּרֻמָּה are unusual formations, for which the usual forms are substituted in the *Keri*. Deceit of their heart is not self-deceit, but deceit which their heart has devised; cf. xxiii. 26. But the people to whom these prophets prophesied are to perish by sword and famine, and to lie unburied in the streets of Jerusalem; cf. viii. 2, xvi. 4. They are not therefore held excused because false prophets told them lies, for they have given credit to these lies, lies that flattered their sinful passions, and have not been willing to hear or take to heart the word of the true prophets, who preached repentance and return to God.¹ To Hitz. it seems surprising that, in describing the punishment which is to fall on seducers and seduced, there should not be severer judgment, in words at least, levelled against the seducers as being those involved in the deeper guilt; whereas the very contrary is the case in the Hebrew text. Hitz. further proposes to get rid of this discrepancy by conjectures founded on the LXX., yet without clearly informing us how we are to read. But the difficulty solves itself as soon as

¹ The *Berleburg Bible* says: "They wish to have such teachers, and even to bring it about that there shall be so many deceiving workers, because they can hardly even endure or listen to the upright ones. That is the reason why it is to go no better with them than we see it is." Calvin too has suggested the doubt: *posset tamen videri parum humaniter agere Deus, quod tam duras pœnas infligit miseris hominibus, qui aliunde decepti sunt*, and has then given the true solution: *certum est, nisi ultro mundus appeteret mendacia, non tantam fore efficaciam diaboli ad fallendum. Quod igitur ita rapiuntur homines ad imposturas, hoc fit eorum culpa, quoniam magis propensi sunt ad vanitatem, quam ut se Deo et verbo ejus subjiciant.*

we pay attention to the connection. The portion of the discourse before us deals with the judgment which is to burst on the godless people, in the course of which those who had seduced the people are only casually mentioned. For the purpose in hand, it was sufficient to say briefly of the seducers that they too should perish by sword and famine who affirmed that these punishments should not befall the people, whereas it was necessary to set before the people the terrors of this judgment in all their horror, in order not to fail of effect. With the reckoning of the various classes of persons: they, their wives, etc., cf. the account of their participation in idolatry, vii. 18. Hitz. rightly paraphrases 'וְשִׁפְכִי: and in this wise will I pour out. רָעָה, not: the calamity destined for them, but: their wickedness which falls on them with its consequences, cf. ii. 19, Hos. ix. 15, for *propheta videtur causam reddere, cur Deus horribile illud iudicium exequi statuerit contra Judæos, nempe quoniam digni erant tali mercede* (Calv.).—Ver. 17. The words, “and speak unto them this word,” surprise us, because no word from God follows, as in xiii. 12, but an exposition of the prophet’s feelings in regard to the dreadful judgment announced. Hence Dahl. and Ew. propose to join the words in question with what goes before, while at the same time Ew. hints a suspicion that an entire sentence has been dropped after the words. But for this suspicion there is no ground, and the joining of the words with the preceding context is contrary to the unfailing usage of this by no means infrequent formula. The true explanation is found in Kimchi and Calvin. The prophet is led to exhibit to the hardened people the grief and pain he feels in contemplating the coming ruin of Judah, *ut pavorem illis incuteret, si forte, cum hæc audirent, resipiscerent* (Kimchi). If not his words, then surely his tears; for the terrible calamity he has to announce must touch and stagger them, so that they may be persuaded to examine themselves and consider what it is that tends to their peace. To make impression on their hardened consciences, he depicts the appalling ruin, because of which his eyes run with tears day and night. On “run down,” etc., cf. ix. 17, xiii. 17, Lam. ii. 18, etc. “Let them not cease” gives emphasis: not be silent, at peace, cf. Lam. iii. 49, *i.e.* weep incessantly day and night. The appellation of the people:

virgin-daughter of my people, *i.e.* daughter that is my people, cf. viii. 11, corresponds to the love revealing itself in tears. The depth of sorrow is further shown in the clause: with a blow that is very dangerous, cf. x. 19. In ver. 18 the prophet portrays the condition of things after the fall of Jerusalem: out upon the field are those pierced with the sword; in the city רָעָב תַּחֲלִיאי, lit. suffering of famine, Deut. xxix. 21, here *abstr. pro concr.* of those pining in famine; and those that remain in life depart into exile. Instead of the people Jeremiah mentions only the prophets and priests as being the flower of God's people. פָּחַד, to wander about, in Hebr. usually in the way of commerce, here acc. to Aram. usage, possibly too with the idea of begging subjoined. In the לֹא יָדְעוּ Graf holds the י to be entirely out of place, while Hitz. pronounces against him. The words are variously taken; *e.g.* and know nothing, wander about aimless and helpless. But with this the omission of the article with אֲרָץ is incompatible. The omission shows that "and know not" furnishes an attribute to "into a land." We therefore translate: and know it not = which they know not, since the pronominal suffix is wont to be often omitted where it can without difficulty be supplied from the preceding clause.

Vers. 19-22 and xv. 1-9. *Renewed supplication and repeated rejection of the same.*—Ver. 19. "Hast thou then really rejected Judah? or doth thy soul loathe Zion? Why hast Thou smitten us, so that there is no healing for us? We look for peace, and there is no good; for the time of healing, and behold terror! Ver. 20. We know, Jahveh, our wickedness, the iniquity of our fathers, for we have sinned against Thee. Ver. 21. Abhor not, for Thy name's sake; disgrace not the throne of Thy glory; remember, break not Thy covenant with us! Ver. 22. Are there among the vain gods of the Gentiles givers of rain, or will the heavens give showers? Art not Thou (He), Jahveh our God? and we hope in Thee, for Thou hast made all these."

Chap. xv. 1. "And Jahveh said unto me: If Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet would not my soul incline to this people. Drive them from my face, that they go forth. Ver. 2. And if they say to thee: Whither shall we go forth? then say to them: Thus hath Jahveh said—Such as are for

death, to death; and such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as are for the famine, to the famine; and such as are for the captivity, to the captivity. Ver. 3. And I appoint over them four kinds, saith Jahveh: the sword to slay and the dogs to tear, the fowls of the heaven and the cattle of the earth, to devour and destroy. Ver. 4. And I give them up to be abused to all kingdoms of the earth, for Manasseh's sake, the son of Hezekiah king of Judah, for what he did in Jerusalem. Ver. 5. For who shall have pity upon thee, Jerusalem? and who shall bemoan thee? and who shall go aside to ask after thy welfare? Ver. 6. Thou hast rejected me, saith Jahveh; thou goest backwards, and so I stretch forth mine hand against thee and destroy thee; I am weary of repenting. Ver. 7. And I fan them with a fan into the gates of the land: bereave, ruin my people; from their ways they turned not. Ver. 8. More in number are his widows become unto me than the sand of the sea; I bring to them, against the mother of the young man, a spoiler at noon-day; I cause to fall upon her suddenly anguish and terrors. Ver. 9. She that hath borne seven languisheth, she breatheth out her soul, her sun goeth down while yet it is day, she is put to shame and confounded; and their residue I give to the sword before their enemies, saith Jahveh."

The Lord had indeed distinctly refused the favour sought for Judah; yet the command to disclose to the people the sorrow of his own soul at their calamity (vers. 17 and 18) gave the prophet courage to renew his supplication, and to ask of the Lord if He had in very truth cast off Judah and Zion (ver. 19), and to set forth the reasons which made this seem impossible (vers. 20-22). In the question, ver. 19, the emphasis lies on the הֲרִיפָה, strengthened as it is by the *inf. abs.*: hast Thou utterly or really rejected? The form of the question is the same as that in ii. 14; first the double question, dealing with a state of affairs which the questioner is unable to regard as being actually the case, and then a further question, conveying wonder at what has happened. לֹא־אֶהְיֶה, loathe, cast from one, is synonymous with רִיפָה. The second clause agrees verbally with viii. 15. The reasons why the Lord cannot have wholly rejected Judah are: 1. That they acknowledge their wickedness. Confession of sin is the beginning of return to God; and in case of

such return, the Lord, by His compassion, has vouchsafed to His people forgiveness and the renewal of covenant blessings; cf. Lev. xxvi. 41 ff., Dent. xxx. 2 ff. Along with their own evil doing, the transgression of their fathers is mentioned, cf. ii. 5 ff., vii. 25 ff., that full confession may be made of the entire weight of wickedness for which Israel has made itself answerable. So that, on its own account, Judah has no claim upon the help of its God. But the Lord may be moved thereto by regard for His name and the covenant relation. On this is founded the prayer of ver. 21: Abhor not, *sc.* thy people, for Thy name's sake, lest Thou appear powerless to help in the eyes of the nations; see on ver. 7 and on Num. xiv. 16. נָבַל, lit. to treat as fools, see on Dent. xxxii. 15, here: make contemptible. The throne of the glory of God is the temple, where Jahveh sits enthroned over the ark of the covenant in the holy of holies, Ex. xxv. 22, etc. The destruction of Jerusalem would, by the sack of the temple, dishonour the throne of the Lord. The object to "remember," viz. "Thy covenant," comes after "break not." The remembering or rememberedness of the covenant is shown in the not breaking maintenance of the same; cf. Lev. xxvi. 44 f. Lastly, we have in ver. 22 the final motive for supplication: that the Lord alone can put an end to trouble. Neither the vain gods of the heathen (הַבְּלִיִּם, see viii. 19) can procure rain, nor can the heaven, as one of the powers of nature, without power from God. אַתָּה הוּא, Thou art (הוּא is the *copula* between subject and predicate). Thou hast made all these. Not: the heaven and the earth, as Hitz. and Gr. would make it, after Isa. xxxvii. 16; still less is it, with Calv.: the punishment inflicted on us; but, as אֵלֶּה demands, the things mentioned immediately before: *cælum, pluvias et quidquid est in omni rerum natura*, Ros. Only when thus taken, does the clause contain any motive for: we wait upon Thee, *i.e.* expect from Thee help out of our trouble. It further clearly appears from this verse that the supplication was called forth by the calamity depicted in vers. 2-5.

Chap. xv. 1-9. *Decisive refusal of the petition.*—Ver. 1. Even Moses and Samuel, who stood so far in God's favour that by their supplications they repeatedly rescued their people from overwhelming ruin (cf. Ex. xvii. 11, xxxii. 11 f., Num. xiv. 13 ff.,

and 1 Sam. vii. 9 f., xii. 17 f., Ps. xcix. 6), if they were to come now before the Lord, would not incline His love towards this people. לִפְנֵי indicates the direction of the soul towards any one; in this connection: the inclination of it towards the people. He has cast off this people and will no longer let them come before His face. In vers. 2-9 this is set forth with terrible earnestness. We must supply the object, "this people," to "drive" from the preceding clause. "From my face" implies the people's standing before the Lord in the temple, where they had appeared bringing sacrifices, and by prayer invoking His help (xiv. 12). To go forth from the temple = to go forth from God's face. Ver. 2. But in case they ask where they are to go to, Jeremiah is to give them the sarcastic direction: Each to the destruction allotted to him. He that is appointed to death, shall go forth to death, etc. The clauses: such as are for death, etc., are to be filled up after the analogy of 2 Sam. xv. 20, 2 Kings viii. 1, so that before the second "death," "sword," etc., we supply the verb "shall go." There are mentioned four kinds of punishments that are to befall the people. The "death" mentioned over and above the sword is death by disease, for which we have in xiv. 12 דִּבְרָר , pestilence, disease; cf. xliii. 11, where death, captivity, and sword are mentioned together, with Ezek. xiv. 21, sword, famine, wild beasts, and disease (דִּבְרָר), and xxxiii. 27, sword, wild beasts, and disease. This doom is made more terrible in ver. 3. The Lord will appoint over them ($\text{פָּקַד$ as in xiii. 21) four kinds, *i.e.* four different destructive powers which shall prepare a miserable end for them. One is the sword already mentioned in ver. 2, which slays them; the three others are to execute judgment on the dead: the dogs which shall tear, mutilate, and partly devour the dead bodies (cf. 2 Kings ix. 35, 37), and birds and beasts of prey, vultures, jackals, and others, which shall make an end of such portions as are left by the dogs. In ver. 4 the whole is summed up in the threatening of Deut. xxviii. 25, that the people shall be delivered over to be abused to all the kingdoms of the earth, and the cause of this terrible judgment is mentioned. The *Chet.* זָעָה is not to be read זָעָה , but זָעָה , and is the contracted form from זָעָה , see on Deut. xxviii. 25, from the *ad.* זָעָה , lit. tossing hither and thither, hence for maltreatment.

For the sake of King Manasseh, who by his godless courses had filled up the measure of the people's sins, so that the Lord must cast Judah away from His face, and give it up to the heathen to be chastised; cf. 2 Kings xxiii. 26, xxiv. 3, with the exposition of these passages; and as to what Manasseh did, see 2 Kings xxi. 1-16.

In vers. 5-9 we have a still further account of this appalling judgment and its causes. The grounding **כִּי** in ver. 5 attaches to the central thought of ver. 4. The sinful people will be given up to all the kingdoms of the earth to be ill used, for no one will or can have compassion on Jerusalem, since its rejection by God is a just punishment for its rejection of the Lord (ver. 6). "Have pity" and "bemoan" denote loving sympathy for the fall of the unfortunate. **הִמָּל**, to feel sympathy; **נָדַד**, to lament and bemoan. **סָוָה**, to swerve from the straight way, and turn aside or enter into any one's house; cf. Gen. xix. 2 f., Ex. iii. 3, etc. **שָׁאַל לְשָׁלוֹם**, to inquire of one as to his health, cf. Ex. xviii. 7; then: to salute one, to desire **לְשָׁלוֹם**, Gen. xliii. 27, Judg. xviii. 15, and often. Not only will none show sympathy for Jerusalem, none will even ask how it goes with her welfare.—Ver. 6. The reason of this treatment: because Jerusalem has dishonoured and rejected its God, therefore He now stretches out His hand to destroy it. To go backwards, instead of following the Lord, cf. vii. 24. This determination the Lord will not change, for He is weary of repenting. **הִנָּחֵם** frequently of the withdrawal, in grace and pity, of a divine decree to punish, cf. iv. 28, Gen. vi. 6 f., Joel ii. 14, etc.—Ver. 7. **וְאַחֲרָם** is a continuation of **וְאַחַר**, ver. 6, and, like the latter, is to be understood prophetically of what God has irrevocably determined to do. It is not a description of what is past, an allusion to the battle lost at Megiddo, as Hitz., carrying out his *à priori* system of slighting prophecy, supposes. To take the verbs of this verse as proper preterites, as J. D. Mich. and Ew. also do, is not in keeping with the contents of the clauses. In the first clause Ew. and Gr. translate **שַׁעַר הָאָרֶץ** gates, *i.e.* exits, boundaries of the earth, and thereby understand the remotest lands of the earth, the four corners or extremities of the earth, Isa. xi. 12 (Ew.). But "gates" cannot be looked on as corners or extremities, nor are they ends or borders, but the inlets and

outlets of cities. For how can a man construe to himself the ends of the earth as the outlets of it? where could one go to from there? Hence it is impossible to take אֶרֶץ of the earth in this case; it is the land of Judah. The gates of the land are either mentioned by synecdoche for the cities, cf. Mic. v. 5, or are the approaches to the land (cf. Nah. iii. 13), its outlets and inlets. Here the context demands the latter sense. וְרָחַק, to fan, *c. q. loci*, to scatter into a place, cf. Ezek. xii. 15, xxx. 26: fan into the outlets of the land, *i.e.* cast out of the land. שָׁבַל, make the people childless, by the fall in battle of the sons, the young men, cf. Ezek. v. 17. The threat is intensified by אֶבְרָתִי, added as asyndeton. The last clause: from their ways, etc., subjoins the reason.—Ver. 8. By the death of the sons, the women lose their husbands, and become widows. לִי is the dative of sympathetic interest. “Sand of the sea” is the figure for a countless number. יָמִים is poetic plural; cf. Ps. lxxviii. 27, Job vi. 3. On these defenceless women come suddenly spoilers, and these mothers who had perhaps borne seven sons give up the ghost and perish without succour, because their sons have fallen in war. Thus proceeds the portrayal as Hitz. has well exhibited it. וְעַל אֵם בָּחוּר is variously interpreted. We must reject the view taken by Ch. B. Mich. from the Syr. and Arab. versions: upon mother and young man; as also the view of Rashi, Cler., Eichh., Dahl., etc., that אֵם means the mother-city, *i.e.* Jerusalem. The true rendering is that of Jerome and Kimchi, who have been followed by J. D. Mich., Hitz., Ew., Graf, and Näg.: upon the mother of the youth or young warrior. This view is favoured by the correspondence of the woman mentioned in ver. 9 who had borne seven sons. Both are individualized as women of full bodily vigour, to lend vividness to the thought that no age and no sex will escape destruction. בְּצַהֲרֵי, at clear noontide, when one least looks for an attack. Thus the word corresponds with the “suddenly” of the next clause. עֵיר, Aramaic form for צִיר, Isa. xiii. 8, pangs. The bearer of seven, *i.e.* the mother of many sons. Seven as the perfect number of children given in blessing by God, cf. 1 Sam. ii. 5, Ruth iv. 15. “She breathes out her life,” cf. Job xxxi. 39. Graf wrongly: she sighs. The sun of her life sets (בָּרָחָה) while it is still day, before the evening of her life has been reached, cf. Am. viii. 9.

"Is put to shame and confounded" is not to be referred to the son, but the mother, who, bereaved of her children, goes covered with shame to the grave. The *Keri* נָפַח for נִפְחָה is an unnecessary change, since נִפְחָה is also construed as fem., Gen. xv. 17. The description closes with a glance cast on those left in life after the overthrow of Jerusalem. These are to be given to the sword when in flight before their enemies, cf. Mic. vi. 14.

Vers. 10–21. COMPLAINT OF THE PROPHET, AND SOOTHING ANSWER OF THE LORD.—His sorrow at the rejection by God of his petition so overcomes the prophet, that he gives utterance to the wish: he had rather not have been born than live on in the calling in which he must ever foretell misery and ruin to his people, thereby provoking hatred and attacks, while his heart is like to break for grief and fellow-feeling; whereupon the Lord reprovingly replies as in vers. 11–14.

Ver. 10. "Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast born me, a man of strife and contention to all the earth! I have not lent out, nor have men lent to me; all curse me. Ver. 11. Jahveh saith, Verily I strengthen thee to thy good; verily I cause the enemy to entreat thee in the time of evil and of trouble. Ver. 12. Does iron break, iron from the north and brass? Ver. 13. Thy substance and thy treasures give I for a prey without a price, and that for all thy sins, and in all thy borders, Ver. 14. And cause thine enemies bring it into a land which thou knowest not; for fire burneth in mine anger, against you it is kindled."

Woe is me, exclaims Jeremiah in ver. 10, that my mother brought me forth! The apostrophe to his mother is significant of the depth of his sorrow, and is not to be understood as if he were casting any reproach on his mother; it is an appeal to his mother to share with him his sorrow at his lot. This lament is consequently very different from Job's cursing of the day of his birth, Job iii. 1. The apposition to the suffix "me," the man of strife and contention, conveys the meaning of the lament in this wise: me, who must yet be a man, with whom the whole world strives and contends. Ew. wrongly renders it: "to be a man of strife," etc.; for it was not his mother's fault that he became such an one. The second clause intimates that he has

not provoked the strife and contention. נָשָׂה, lend, *i.e.* give on loan, and with לָ, to lend to a person, lend out; hence נִשְׂה, debtor, and נוֹשֶׂה בוֹ, creditor, Isa. xxiv. 2. These words are not an individualizing of the thought: all interchange of friendly services between me and human society is broken off (Hitz.). For intercourse with one's fellow-men does not chiefly, or in the foremost place, consist in lending and borrowing of gold and other articles. Borrowing and lending is rather the frequent occasion of strife and ill-will;¹ and it is in this reference that it is here brought up. Jeremiah says he has neither as bad debtor or disobliging creditor given occasion to hatred and quarrelling, and yet all curse him. This is the meaning of the last words, in which the form מְקַלְלֵנִי is hard to explain. The rabbinical attempts to clear it up by means of a commingling of the verbs קָלַל and קָלָה are now, and reasonably, given up. Ew. (*Gram.* § 350, c) wants to make it מְקַלְלֵנִי; but probably the form has arisen merely out of the wrong dividing of a word, and ought to be read בְּקִלְלֵנִי. So read most recent scholars, after the example of J. D. Mich.; cf. also Böttcher, *Grammat.* ii. S. 322, note. It is true that we nowhere else find בְּקִלְלֵנִי; but we find an analogy in the archaic בְּקִלְלֵנִי. In its favour we have, besides, the circumstance, that the heavy form קָלָה is by preference appended to short words; see Böttcher, as above, S. 21.—To this complaint the Lord makes answer in vers. 11-14, first giving the prophet the prospect of complete vindication against those that oppose him (ver. 11), and then (vers. 12-14) pointing to the circumstances that shall compel the people to this result. The introduction of God's answer by אָמֵן יְיָ without בֹּה is found also in xlv. 25, where Graf erroneously seeks to join the formula with what precedes. In the present 11th verse the want of the בֹּה is the less felt, since the word from the Lord that follows bears in the first place upon the prophet himself, and is not addressed to the people. אָמֵן is a particle of asseveration, introducing the answer which follows with a solemn assurance. The vowel-points of שְׁרִיתֶיךָ require שְׁרִיתֶיךָ, 1 *pers. perf.*, from שָׁרָה = the Aram. שָׂרָא, loose, solve (Dan. v. 12): I loose (free) thee to thy good. The *Chet.*

¹ Calvin aptly remarks: *Unde enim inter homines et lites et jurgia, nisi quia male inter ipsos convenit, dum ultro et citro negotiantur?*

is variously read and rendered. By reason of the preceding **לֹא**, the view is improbable that we have here an infinitive; either **שָׁרוּתְךָ**, *inf. Pi.* of **שָׁרַר** in the sig. inflict suffering: "thy affliction becomes welfare" (Hitz.); or **שָׁרוּתְךָ**, *inf. Kal* of **שָׁרָה**, set free: thy release falls out to thy good (Ros., etc.). The context suggests the 1 *pers. perf.* of **שָׁרַר**, against which the defective written form is no argument, since this occurs frequently elsewhere, e.g. **עָנִיתִיךָ**, Nah. i. 12. The question remains: whether we are to take **שָׁרַר** according to the Hebrew usage: I afflict thee to thy good, harass thee to thine advantage (Gesen. in the *thes.* p. 1482, and Näg.), or according to the Aramaic (**ܫܪܐ**) in the sig. *firmabo, stabiliam*: I strengthen thee or support thee to thy good (Ew., Maur.). We prefer the latter rendering, because the saying: I afflict thee, is not true of God; since the prophet's troubles came not from God, nor is Jeremiah complaining of affliction at the hand of God, but only that he was treated as an enemy by all the world. **לְטוֹב**, for good, as in Ps. cxix. 122, so that it shall fall out well for thee, lead to a happy issue, for which we have elsewhere **לְטוֹבָה**, xiv. 11, Ps. lxxxvi. 17, Neh. v. 19.—This happy issue is disclosed in the second clause: I bring it about that the enemy shall in time of trouble turn himself in supplication to thee, because he shall recognise in the prophet's prayers the only way of safety; cf. the fulfilment of this promise, xxi. 1 f., xxxvii. 3, xxxviii. 14 ff., xlii. 2. **הַפְּנִינִי**, here causative, elsewhere only with the sig. of the *Kal*, e.g. xxxvi. 25, Isa. liii. 12. "The enemy," in unlimited generality: each of thine adversaries. That the case will turn out so is intimated by vers. 12–14, the exposition of which is, however, difficult and much debated. Ver. 12 is rendered either: can iron (ordinary iron) break northern iron and brass (the first "iron" being taken as subject, the second as object)? or: can one break iron, (namely) iron of the north, and brass ("iron" being taken both times as object, and "break" having its subject indefinite)? or: can iron . . . break (**יִרֹץ** intrans. as in xi. 16)? Of these three translations the first has little probability, inasmuch as the simile of one kind of iron breaking another is unnatural. But Hitz.'s view is wholly unnatural: that the first "iron" and "brass" are the object, and that "iron

from the north" is subject, standing as it does between the two objects, as in Cant. v. 6, where, however, the construction alleged is still very doubtful. Nor does the sense, which would in this way be expressed, go far to commend this rendering. By iron and brass we would then have to understand, according to vi. 28, the stiff-necked Jewish people; and by iron from the north, the calamity that was to come from the north. Thus the sense would be: will this calamity break the sullen obstinacy of the prophet's enemies? will it make them pliable? The verse would thus contain an objection on the part of the prophet against the concession vouchsafed by God in ver. 11. With this idea, however, vers. 11-14 are emphatically not in harmony. The other two translations take each a different view of the sense. The one party understand by iron and brass the prophet; the other, either the Jewish people or the northern might of the Chaldean empire. Holding that the prophet is so symbolized, L. de Dieu and Umbr. give the sense thus: "Let him but bethink him of his immovable firmness against the onsets of the world; in spite of all, he is iron, northern iron and brass, that cannot be broken." Thus God would here be speaking to the prophet. Dahl., again, holds the verse to be spoken by the prophet, and gives the sense: Can I, a frail and feeble man, break the determination of a numerous and stiff-necked nation? Against the latter view the objection already alleged against Hitz. is decisive, showing as it did that the verse cannot be the prophet's speech or complaint; against the former, the improbability that God would call the prophet iron, northern iron and brass, when the very complaint he was making showed how little of the firmness of iron he had about him. If by the northern iron we understand the Jewish people, then God would here say to the prophet, that he should always contend in vain against the stiff-neckedness of the people (Eichh.). This would have been but small comfort for him. But the appellation of northern iron does not at all fit the Jewish people. For the observation that the hardest iron, the steel made by the Chalybes in Pontus, was imported from the north, does not serve the turn; since a distinction between ordinary iron and very hard iron nowhere else appears in the Old Testament. The attribute "from the north" points

manifestly to the iron sway of the Chaldean empire (Ros., Ew., Maur., and many others); and the meaning of the verse can only be this: As little as a man can break iron, will the Jewish people be able to break the hostile power of the north (xiii. 20). Taken thus, the pictorial style of the verse contains a suggestion that the adversaries of the prophet will, by the crushing power of the Chaldeans, be reduced to the condition of turning themselves in supplication to the prophet.—With this vers. 13 and 14 are thus connected: This time of evil and tribulation (ver. 10) will not last long. Their enemies will carry off the people's substance and treasures as their booty into a strange land. These verses are to be taken, with Umbr., as a declaration from the mouth of the Lord to His guilt-burdened people. This appears from the contents of the verses. The immediate transition from the address to the prophet to that to the people is to be explained by the fact, that both the prophet's complaint, ver. 10, and God's answer, vers. 11–13, have a full bearing on the people; the prophet's complaint at the attacks on the part of the people serving to force them to a sense of their obstinacy against the Lord, and God's answer to the complaint, that the prophet's announcement will come true, and that he will then be justified, serving to crush their sullen doggedness. The connection of thought in vers. 13 and 14 is thus: The people that so assaults thee, by reason of thy threatening judgment, will not break the iron might of the Chaldeans, but will by them be overwhelmed. It will come about as thou hast declared to them in my name; their substance and their treasures will I give as booty to the Chaldeans. לֹא בְמַחִיר = בְּלֹא מַחִיר, Isa. lv. 1, not for purchase-money, *i.e.* freely. As God sells His people for nought, *i.e.* gives them up to their enemies (cf. Isa. lii. 3, Ps. xlv. 13), so here He threatens to deliver up their treasures to the enemy as a booty, and for nought. When Graf says that this last thought has no sufficient meaning, his reasons therefor do not appear. Nor is there anything "peculiar," or such as could throw suspicion on the passage, in the juxtaposition of the two qualifying phrases: and that for all thy sins, and in all thy borders. The latter phrase bears unmistakeably on the treasures, not on the sins. "Cause . . . to bring it," lit. I cause them (the treasures)

to pass with thine enemies into a land which thou knowest not, *i.e.* I cause the enemies to bring them, etc. Hitz. and Graf erroneously: I carry thine enemies away into a land; which affords no suitable sense. The grounding clause: for hire, etc., is taken from Deut. xxxii. 22, to show that that threatening of judgment contained in Moses' song is about to come upon degenerate Judah. "Against you it is kindled" apply the words to Jeremiah's contemporaries.¹

Vers. 15-18. *Jeremiah continues his complaint.*—Ver. 15. "Thou knowest it, Jahveh; remember me, and visit me, and revenge me on my persecutors! Do not, in Thy long-suffering, take me away; know that for Thy sake I bear reproach. Ver. 16. Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy words were to me a delight and the joy of my heart: for Thy name was named upon me, Jahveh, God of hosts. Ver. 17. I sat not in the assembly of the laughers, nor was merry; because of Thy hand I sat solitary; for with indignation Thou hast filled me. Ver. 18. Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound malignant? will not heal. Wilt Thou really be to me as a deceiving brook, a water that doth not endure?"

The Lord's answer, vers. 11-14, has not yet restored tranquillity to the prophet's mind; since in it his vindication by

¹ Vers. 11-14 are pronounced spurious by Hitz., Graf, and Näg., on the ground that vers. 13 and 14 are a mere quotation, corrupted in the text, from xvii. 3, 4, and that all the three verses destroy the connection, containing an address to the people that does not at all fit into the context. But the interruption of the continuity could at most prove that the verses had got into a wrong place, as is supposed by Ew., who transposes them, and puts them next to ver. 9. But for this change in place there are no sufficient grounds, since, as our exposition of them shows, the verses in question can be very well understood in the place which they at present occupy. The other allegation, that vers. 13 and 14 are a quotation, corrupted in text, from xvii. 3, 4, is totally without proof. In xvii. 3, 4 we have simply the central thoughts of the present passage repeated, but modified to suit their new context, after the manner characteristic of Jeremiah. The genuineness of the verses is supported by the testimony of the LXX., which has them here, while it omits them in xvii. 3, 4; and by the fact, that it is inconceivable they should have been interpolated as a gloss in a wholly unsuitable place. For those who impugn the genuineness have not even made the attempt to show the possibility or probability of such a gloss arising.

means of the abasement of his adversaries had been kept at an indefinite distance. And so he now, ver. 15, prays the Lord to revenge him on his adversaries, and not to let him perish, since for His sake he bears reproach. The object to "Thou knowest, Lord," appears from the context,—namely: "the attacks which I endure," or more generally: Thou knowest my case, my distress. At the same time he clearly means the harassment detailed in ver. 10, so that "Thou knowest" is, as to its sense, directly connected with ver. 10. But it by no means follows from this that vers. 11–14 are not original; only that Jeremiah did not feel his anxiety put at rest by the divine answer conveyed in these verses. In the climax: Remember me, visit me, *i.e.* turn Thy care on me, and revenge me, we have the utterance of the importunity of his prayer, and therein, too, the extremity of his distress. According to Thy long-suffering, *i.e.* the long-suffering Thou showest towards my persecutors, take me not away, *i.e.* do not deliver me up to final ruin. This prayer he supports by the reminder, that for the Lord's sake he bears reproach; cf. Ps. lxxix. 8. Further, the imperative: know, recognise, bethink thee of, is the utterance of urgent prayer. In ver. 16 he exhibits how he suffers for the Lord's sake. The words of the Lord which came to him he has received with eagerness, as it had been the choicest dainties. "Thy words were found" intimates that he had come into possession of them as something actual, without particularizing how they were revealed. With the figurative expression: I ate them, cf. the symbolical embodiment of the figure, Ezek. ii. 9, iii. 3, Apoc. x. 9 f. The *Keri* כִּרְיָה is an uncalled for correction, suggested by the preceding כִּי, and the *Chet.* is perfectly correct. Thy words turned out to me a joy and delight, because Thy name was named upon me, *i.e.* because Thou hast revealed Thyself to me, hast chosen me to be the proclaimer of Thy word.—Ver. 17. To this calling he has devoted his whole life: has not sat in the assembly of the laughers, nor made merry with them; but sat alone, *i.e.* avoided all cheerful company. Because of Thy hand, *i.e.* because Thy hand had laid hold on me. The hand of Jahveh is the divine power which took possession of the prophets, transported their spirit to the ecstatic domain of inner vision, and impelled to prophesy; cf. xx. 7, Isa. viii. 11, Ezek. i. 3, etc.

Alone I sat, because Thou hast filled me with indignation. **עַם** is the wrath of God against the moral corruptness and infatuation of Judah, with which the Spirit of God has filled Jeremiah in order that he may publish it abroad, cf. vi. 11. The sadness of what he had to publish filled his heart with the deepest grief, and constrained him to keep far from all cheery good fellowship.—Ver. 18. Why is my pain become perpetual? “My pain” is the pain or grief he feels at the judgment he has to announce to the people; not his pain at the hostility he has on that account to endure. **נָצַח** adverbial = **לְנֶצַח**, as in Am. i. 11, Ps. xiii. 2, etc. “My wound,” the blow that has fallen on him. **אֲנִישָׁהּ**, malignant, is explained by “(that) will not heal,” cf. xxx. 12, Mic. i. 9. The clause **הֲיִזְתָּהּ וְנִי** still depends on **לִפְתָּהּ**, and the infin. gives emphasis: Wilt Thou really be? **אֶבְרָךְ**, lit. lying, deception, means here, and in Mic. i. 16, a deceptive torrent that dries up in the season of drought, and so disappoints the hope of finding water, cf. Job vi. 15 ff. “A water,” etc., is epexegetis: water that doth not endure. To this the Lord answers—

Vers. 19–21. *By reprimanding his impatience, and by again assuring him of His protection and of rescue from the power of his oppressors.*—Ver. 19. “Therefore thus saith Jahveh: If thou return, then will I bring thee again to serve me; and if thou separate the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth. They will return to thee, but thou shalt not return unto them. Ver. 20. And I make thee unto this people a strong wall of brass, so that they fight against thee, but prevail not against thee; for I am with thee, to help thee and to save thee, saith Jahveh. Ver. 21. And I save thee out of the hand of the wicked, and deliver thee out of the clutch of the violent.”

In the words: if thou return, lies the reproach that in his complaint, in which his indignation had hurried him on to doubt God's faithfulness, Jeremiah had sinned and must repent. **אֲשִׁיבָךְ** is by many commentators taken adverbially and joined with the following words: then will I again cause thee to stand before me. But this adverbial use has been proved only for the Kal of **שָׁב**, not for the Hiphil, which must here be taken by itself: then will I bring thee again, *sc.* into proper relations with me—namely, to stand before me, *i.e.* to be my servant. **עָמַד**

לְפָנַי, of the standing of the servant before his lord, to receive his commands, and so also of prophets, cf. 1 Kings xvii. 1, xviii. 15, 2 Kings iii. 14, etc. In the words: if thou make to go forth, *i.e.* separate the precious from the vile, we have the figure of metal-refining, in course of which the pure metal is by fusion parted from the earthy and other ingredients mixed with it. The meaning of the figure is, however, variously understood. Some think here, unfittingly, of good and bad men; so Chald. and Rashi: if thou cause the good to come forth of the bad, turn the good into bad; or, if out of the evil mass thou cause to come forth at least a few as good, *i.e.* if thou convert them (Ch. B. Mich., Ros., etc.). For we cannot here have to do with the issue of his labours, as Graf well remarks, since this did not lie in his own power. Just as little is the case one of contrast between God's word and man's word, the view adopted by Ven., Eichh., Dahl., Hitz., Ew. The idea that Jeremiah presented man's word for God's word, or God's word mixed with spurious, human additions, is utterly foreign to the context; nay, rather it was just because he declared only what God imposed on him that he was so hard bested. Further, that idea is wholly inconsistent with the nature of true prophecy. Maurer has hit upon the truth: *si quæ pretiosa in te sunt, admixtis liberaveris sordibus, si virtutes quas habes maculis liberaveris impatientiæ et iracundiæ*; with whom Graf agrees. עָפָרָא (with the so-called עֵפֶר *verit.*), as my mouth shalt thou be, *i.e.* as the instrument by which I speak, cf. Ex. iv. 16. Then shall his labours be crowned with success. They (the adversaries) will turn themselves to thee, in the manner shown in ver. 11, but thou shalt not turn thyself to them, *i.e.* not yield to their wishes or permit thyself to be moved by them from the right way. Ver. 20 f. After this reprimand, the Lord renews to him the promise of His most active support, such as He had promised him at his call, i. 18 f.; "to save thee" being amplified in ver. 21.

Chap. xvi. 1–xvii. 4. THE COURSE TO BE PURSUED BY THE PROPHET IN REFERENCE TO THE APPROACHING OVERTHROW OF THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH.—The ruin of Jerusalem and of Judah will inevitably come. This the prophet must

proclaim by word and deed. To this end he is shown in xvi. 1-9 what relation he is to maintain towards the people, now grown ripe for judgment, and next in vers. 10-15 he is told the cause of this terrible judgment; then comes an account of its fulfilment (vers. 16-21); then again, finally, we have the cause of it explained once more (xvii. 1-4).

Vers. 1-9. *The course to be pursued by the prophet with reference to the approaching judgment.*—Ver. 1. “And the word of Jahveh came to me, saying: Ver. 2. Thou shalt not take thee a wife, neither shalt thou have sons or daughters in this place. Ver. 3. For thus hath Jahveh said concerning the sons and the daughters that are born in this place, and concerning their mothers that bear them, and concerning their fathers that beget them in this land: Ver. 4. By deadly suffering shall they die, be neither lamented or buried; dung upon the field shall they become; and by sword and by famine shall they be consumed, and their carcases shall be meat for the fowls of the heavens and the beasts of the field. Ver. 5. For thus hath Jahveh said: Come not into the house of mourning, and go not to lament, and bemoan them not; for I have taken away my peace from this people, saith Jahveh, grace and mercies. Ver. 6. And great and small shall die in this land, not be buried; they shall not lament them, nor cut themselves, nor make themselves bald for them. Ver. 7. And they shall not break bread for them in their mourning, to comfort one for the dead; nor shall they give to any the cup of comfort for his father and his mother. Ver. 8. And into the house of feasting go not, to sit by them, to eat and to drink. Ver. 9. For thus hath spoken Jahveh of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I cause to cease out of this place before your eyes, and in your days, the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride.”

What the prophet is here bidden to do and to forbear is closely bound up with the proclamation enjoined on him of judgment to come on sinful Judah. This connection is brought prominently forward in the reasons given for these commands. He is neither to take a wife nor to beget children, because all the inhabitants of the land, sons and daughters, mothers and fathers, are to perish by sickness, the sword, and famine (vers.

3 and 4). He is both to abstain from the customary usages of mourning for the dead, and to keep away from mirthful feasts, in order to give the people to understand that, by reason of the multitude of the dead, customary mourning will have to be given up, and that all opportunity for merry-making will disappear (vers. 5-9). Adapting thus his actions to help to convey his message, he will approve himself to be the mouth of the Lord, and then the promised divine protection will not fail. Thus closely is this passage connected with the preceding complaint and reproof of the prophet (xv. 10-21), while it at the same time further continues the threatening of judgment in xv. 1-9.—With the prohibition to take a wife, cf. the apostle's counsel, 1 Cor. vii. 26. "This place" alternates with "this land," and so must not be limited to Jerusalem, but bears on Judah at large. יְלָדִים, *adject. verbale*, as in Ex. i. 32. The form מְמוֹתֵי is found, besides here, only in Ezek. xxviii. 8, where it takes the place of מוֹתֵי, ver. 10. מְמוֹתֵי תַחֲלָאִים, lit. deaths of sicknesses or sufferings, *i.e.* deaths by all kinds of sufferings, since תַחֲלָאִים is not to be confined to disease, but in xiv. 18 is used of pining away by famine. With "they shall not be lamented," cf. xxv. 33, viii. 2, xiv. 16, vii. 33.—Ver. 5 ff. The command not to go into a house of mourning (בֵּית אֵבֶל, loud crying, cry of lament for one dead, see on Am. vi. 7), not to show sympathy with the survivors, is explained by the Lord in the fearfully solemn saying: I withdraw from this people my peace, grace, and mercy. שְׁלוֹם is not "the inviolateness of the relation between me and my people" (Graf), but the peace of God which rested on Judah, the source of its well-being, of its life and prosperity, and which showed itself to the sinful race in the extension to them of grace and mercy. The consequence of the withdrawal of this peace is the death of great and small in such multitudes that they can neither be buried nor mourned for (ver. 6). הִתְחַנֵּךְ, cut one's self, is used in Deut. xiv. 1 for נָתַן שְׂרָט, to make cuts in the body, Lev. xix. 28; and קָרַח, *Niph.*, to crop one's self bald, acc. to Deut. xiv. 1, to shave a bare place on the front part of the head above the eyes. These are two modes of expressing passionate mourning for the dead which were forbidden to the Israelites in the law, yet which remained in use among the people, see on Lev. xix.

28 and Dent. xiv. 1. לָהֶם, for them, in honour of the dead. —Ver. 7. פָּרַם, as in Isa. lviii. 7, for פָּרַשׁ, Lam. iv. 4, break, *sc.* the bread (cf. Isa. *l.c.*) for mourning, and to give to drink the cup of comfort, does not refer to the meals which were held in the house of mourning upon occasion of a death after the interment, for this custom cannot be proved of the Israelites in Old Testament times, and is not strictly demanded by the words of the verse. To break bread to any one does not mean to hold a feast with him, but to bestow a gift of bread upon him; cf. Isa. lviii. 7. Correspondingly, to give to drink, does not here mean to drink to one's health at a feast, but only to present with wine to drink. The words refer to the custom of sending bread and wine for refreshment into the house of the surviving relatives of one dead, to comfort them in their sorrow; cf. 2 Sam. iii. 35, xii. 16 ff., and the remarks on Ezek. xxiv. 17. The singular suffixes on לִנְחָמוֹ, אֶבְיוֹ, and אִמּוֹ, alongside of the plurals לָהֶם and אוֹתָם, are to be taken distributively of every one who is to be comforted upon occasion of a death in his house; and לָהֶם is not to be changed, as by J. D. Mich. and Hitz., into לָחֶם.—Ver. 8 f. The prophet is to withdraw from all participation in mirthful meals and feasts, in token that God will take away all joy from the people. בֵּית-מִשְׁתֶּה, house in which a feast is given. אוֹתָם, for אֵתָם, refers, taken *ad sensum*, to the others who take part in the feast. On ver. 9, cf. vii. 34.

Vers. 10-15. "And when thou showest this people all these things, and they say unto thee, Wherefore hath Jahveh pronounced all this great evil against us, and what is our transgression, and what our sin that we have committed against Jahveh our God? Ver. 11. Then say thou to them, Because your fathers have forsaken me, saith Jahveh, and have walked after other gods, and served them, and worshipped them, and have forsaken me, and not kept my law; Ver. 12. And ye did yet worse than your fathers; and behold, ye walk each after the stubbornness of his evil heart, hearkening not unto me. Ver. 13. Therefore I cast you out of this land into the land which ye know not, neither ye nor your fathers, and there may ye serve other gods day and night, because I will show you no favour. Ver. 14. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith Jahveh, that it shall no more be said, By the life of Jahveh,

that brought up the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt, Ver. 15. But, By the life of Jahveh, that brought the sons of Israel out of the land of the north, and out of all the lands whither I had driven them, and I bring them again into their land that I gave to their fathers."

The turn of the discourse in vers. 10 and 11 is like that in v. 19. With ver. 11 cf. xi. 8, 10, vii. 24; with "ye did yet worse," etc., cf. 1 Kings xiv. 9; and on "after the stubbornness," cf. on iii. 17. The apodosis begins with "therefore I cast you out." On this head cf. vii. 15, ix. 15, and xxii. 26. The article in על־הָאָרֶץ, Graf quite unnecessarily insists on having cancelled, as out of place. It is explained sufficiently by the fact, that the land, of which mention has so often been made, is looked on as a specific one, and is characterized by the following relative clause, as one unknown to the people. Besides, the "ye know not" is not meant of geographical ignorance, but, as is often the case with יָדָע, the knowledge is that obtained by direct experience. They know not the land, because they have never been there. "There ye may serve them," Ros. justly characterizes as *concessio cum ironia*: there ye may serve, as long as ye will, the gods whom ye have so longed after. The irony is especially marked in the "day and night." Here Jeremiah has in mind Deut. iv. 28, xxviii. 36, 64. אֲשֶׁר is causal, giving the grounds of the threat, "I cast you out." The form תִּיָּנֶה is ἀπ. λεγ.—In vers. 14 and 15 the prophet opens to the people a view of ultimate redemption from the affliction amidst the heathen, into which, for their sin, they will be cast. By and by men will swear no more by Jahveh who redeemed them out of Egypt, but by Jahveh who has brought them again from the land of the north and the other lands into which they have been thrust forth. In this is implied that this second deliverance will be a blessing which shall outshine the former blessing of redemption from Egypt. But just as this deliverance will excel the earlier one, so much the greater will the affliction of Israel in the northern land be than the Egyptian bondage had been. On this point Ros. throws especial weight, remarking that the aim of these verses is not so much to give promise of coming salvation, as to announce *instare illis atrocius malum, quam illud Ægyptiacum, eamque quam mox sint subituri servitutem multo*

fore duriozem, quam olim Aegyptiaca fuerit. But though this idea does lie *implicite* in the words, yet we must not fail to be sure that the prospect held out of a future deliverance of Israel from the lands into which it is soon to be scattered, and of its restoration again to the land of its fathers, has, in the first and foremost place, a comforting import, and that it is intended to preserve the godly from despair under the catastrophe which is now awaiting them.¹ לִּנְחֵם is not *nevertheless*, but, as universally, *therefore*; and the train of thought is as follows: Because the Lord will, for their idolatry, cast forth His people into the lands of the heathen, just for that very reason will their redemption from exile not fail to follow, and this deliverance surpass in gloriousness the greatest of all former deeds of blessing, the rescue of Israel from Egypt. The prospect of future redemption given amidst announcements of judgment cannot be surprising in Jeremiah, who elsewhere also interweaves the like happy forecastings with his most solemn threatenings; cf. iv. 27, v. 10, 18, with iii. 14 f., xxiii. 3 ff., etc. "This ray of light, falling suddenly into the darkness, does not take us more by surprise than 'I will not make a full end,' iv. 27. There is therefore no reason for regarding these two verses as interpolations from xxiii. 7, 8" (Graf).

Vers. 16-21. *Further account of the punishment foretold, with the reasons for the same.*—Ver. 16. “Behold, I send for many fishers, saith Jahveh, who shall fish them, and after will I send for many hunters, who shall hunt them from every mountain and every hill, and out of the clefts of the rock. Ver. 17. For mine eyes are upon all their ways, they are not hidden from me, neither is their iniquity concealed from mine eyes. Ver. 18. And first, I requite double their iniquity and their sin, because they defiled my land with the carcasses of their detestables, and with their abominations they have filled mine inheritance.

¹ Calvin has excellently brought out both moments, and has thus expounded the thought of the passage: "Scitis unde patres vestri exierint, nempe e fornace ænea, quemadmodum alibi loquitur (xi. 4) et quasi ex profunda morte; itaque redemptio illa debuit esse memorabilis usque ad finem mundi. Sed jam Deus conjiciet vos in abyssum, quæ longe profundior erit illa Ægypti tyrannide, e qua erepti sunt patres vestri; nam si inde vos redimat, erit miraculum longe excellentius ad posterum, ut fere exstinguat vel saltem obscurat memoriam prioris illius redemptionis."

Ver. 19. Jahveh, my strength and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of trouble ! Unto Thee shall the peoples come from the ends of the earth and say : But lies have our fathers inherited, vanity, and amidst them none profiteth at all. Ver. 20. Shall a man make gods to himself, which are yet no gods ? Ver. 21. Therefore, behold, I make them to know this once, I make them to know my hand and my might, and they shall know that my name is Jahveh."

Vers. 16-18 are a continuation of the threatening in ver. 13, that Judah is to be cast out, but are directly connected with ver. 15*b*, and elucidate the expulsion into many lands there foretold. The figures of the fishers and hunters do not bespeak the gathering again and restoration of the scattered people, as Ven. would make out, but the carrying of Judah captive out of his land. This is clear from the second of the figures, for the hunter does not gather the animals together, but kills them ; and the reference of the verses is put beyond a doubt by vers. 17 and 18, and is consequently admitted by all other comm. The two figures signify various kinds of treatment at the hands of enemies. The fishers represent the enemies that gather the inhabitants of the land as in a net, and carry them wholesale into captivity (cf. Am. iv. 2, Hab. i. 15). The hunters, again, are those who drive out from their hiding-places, and slay or carry captive such as have escaped from the cities, and have taken refuge in the mountains and ravines ; cf. iv. 29, Judg. vi. 2, 1 Sam. xiii. 6. In this the idea is visibly set forth that none shall escape the enemy. שָׁלַח c. הָ pers., send for one, cause him to come, as in xiv. 3 (send for water), so that there is no call to take הָ according to the Aram. usage as sign of the accusative, for which we can cite in Jeremiah only the case in xl. 2. The form חֲזִיִּים (*Chet.*) agrees with Ezek. xlvii. 10, while the *Keri*, חֲזִיִּים, is a formation similar to צִידִים. In the second clause רַבִּים is, like the numerals, made to precede the noun ; cf. Prov. xxxi. 29, Ps. lxxxix. 51.—For the Lord knows their doings and dealings, and their transgressions are not hid from Him ; cf. xxiii. 24, xxxii. 19. עַל for אֵל, indicating the direction. Their ways are not the ways of flight, but their course of action.—Ver. 18. The punishment foretold is but retribution for their sins. Because they have defiled the land by

idolatry, they shall be driven out of it. רִאשֹׁנָה, first, is by Jerome, Hitz., Ew., Umbr. made to refer to the salvation promised in ver. 15: first, *i.e.* before the restoration of my favour spoken of in ver. 15, I requite double. Against this Graf has objected, that on this view "first" would appear somewhat superfluous; and Näg., that the manifestly intended antithesis to מִשְׁנֶה is left out of account. There is little force in either objection. Even Näg.'s paraphrase does not do full justice to the presumed antithesis; for if we render: "For the first time the double shall be requited, in the event of repetition a severer standard shall be used," then the antithesis to "first" would not be "double," but the supplied repetition of the offence. There is not the slightest hint in the context to lead us to supply this idea; nor is there any antithesis between "first" and "double." It is a mere assumption of the comm., which Rashi, Kimchi, Ros., Maur., etc., have brought into the text by the interpolation of a ו *cop.* before מִשְׁנֶה: I requite the first of their transgressions and the repetition of them, *i.e.* their earlier and their repeated sins, or the sins committed by their fathers and by themselves, on a greater scale. We therefore hold the reference to ver. 15 to be the only true one, and regard it as corresponding both to the words before us and the context. "The double of their iniquity," *i.e.* ample measure for their sins (cf. Isa. xl. 2, Job xi. 6) by way of the horrors of war and the sufferings of the exile. The sins are more exactly defined by: because they defiled my land by the carcasses of their detestables, *i.e.* their dead detestable idols. נִבְלָת שְׂקִיצִים is formed according to פְּגִירָה, Lev. xxvi. 30, and it belongs to "they defiled," not to "they filled," as the Masoretic accentuation puts it; for מָלֵא is construed, not with בָּ of the thing, but with double accus.; cf. Ezek. viii. 17, xxx. 11, etc. So it is construed in the last clause: With their abominations they have filled the inheritance of Jahveh, *i.e.* the land of the Lord (cf. ii. 7). The *infin.* מְלֵאִים is continued by מְלֵאִי in *verbo fin.*, as usual.

In vers. 19-21 we have more as to the necessity of the threatened punishment. The prophet turns to the Lord as his defence and fortress in time of need, and utters the hope that even the heathen may some time turn to the Lord and confess the vanity of idolatry, since the gods which men make are no

gods. To this the Lord answers in ver. 21, that just therefore He must punish His idolatrous people, so that they shall feel His power and learn to know His name.—Ver. 19. In his cry to the Lord: My strength . . . in the day of trouble, which agrees closely with Ps. xxviii. 8, lix. 17, xviii. 3, Jeremiah utters not merely his own feelings, but those which should animate every member of his people. In the time of need the powerlessness of the idols to help, and so their vanity, becomes apparent. Trouble therefore drives to God, the Almighty Lord and Ruler of the world, and forces to bend under His power. The coming tribulation is to have this fruit not only in the case of the Israelites, but also in that of the heathen nations, so that they shall see the vanity of the idolatry they have inherited from their fathers, and be converted to the Lord, the only true God. How this knowledge is to be awakened in the heathen, Jeremiah does not disclose; but it may be gathered from ver. 15, from the deliverance of Israel, there announced, out of the heathen lands into which they had been cast forth. By this deliverance the heathen will be made aware both of the almighty power of the God of Israel and of the nothingness of their own gods. On הָבֵל cf. ii. 5; and with “none that profiteth,” cf. ii. 8, xiv. 22. In ver. 20 the prophet confirms what the heathen have been saying. The question has a negative force, as is clear from the second clause. In ver. 21 we have the Lord’s answer to the prophet’s confession in ver. 19. Since the Jews are so blinded that they prefer vain idols to the living God, He will this time so show them His hand and His strength in that foretold chastisement, that they shall know His name, *i.e.* know that He alone is God in deed and in truth. Cf. Ezek. xii. 15, Ex. iii. 14.

Chap. xvii. 1–4. Judah’s sin is ineffaceably stamped upon the hearts of the people and on their altars. These four verses are closely connected with the preceding, and show why it is necessary that Judah be cast forth amidst the heathen, by reason of its being perfectly steeped in idolatry. Ver. 1. “The sin of Judah is written with an iron pen, with the point of a diamond graven on the table of their hearts and on the horns of your altars. Ver. 2. As they remember their children, so do they their altars and their Astartes by the green tree upon

the high hills. Ver. 3. My mountain in the field, thy substance, all thy treasures give I for a prey, thy high places for sin in all thy borders. Ver. 4. And thou shalt discontinue, and that of thine own self, from thine inheritance that I gave thee, and I cause thee to serve thine enemies in a land which thou knowest not; for a fire have ye kindled in mine anger, for ever it burneth."

The sin of Judah (ver. 1) is not their sinfulness, their proneness to sin, but their sinful practices, idolatry. This is written upon the tables of the hearts of them of Judah, *i.e.* stamped on them (cf. for this figure Prov. iii. 3, vii. 3), and that deep and firmly. This is intimated by the writing with an iron pen and graving with a diamond. צֶפֶן, from צָפַר, scratch, used in Dent. xxi. 12 for the nail of the finger, here of the point of the style or graving-iron, the diamond pencil which gravers use for carving in iron, steel, and stone.¹ נֶשֶׁךְ, diamond, not emery as Boch. and Ros. supposed; cf. Ezek. iii. 9, Zech. vii. 12. The things last mentioned are so to be distributed that "on the table of their heart" shall belong to "written with a pen of iron," and "on the horns of their altars" to "with the point of a diamond graven." The iron style was used only for writing or carving letters in a hard material, Job xix. 24. If with it one wrote on tables, it was for the purpose of impressing the writing very deeply, so that it could not easily be effaced. The having of sin engraved upon the tables of the heart does not mean that a sense of unatoned sin could not be got rid of (Graf); for with a sense of sin we have here nothing to do, but with the deep and firm root sin has taken in the heart. To the tables of the heart as the inward seat of sin are opposed the horns of their altars (at "altars" the discourse is directly addressed to the Jews). By altars are generally understood idolatrous altars, partly because of the plural, "since the altar of Jahveh was but one," partly because of ver. 2, where the altars in question are certainly those of the idols. But the first reason proves nothing, since the temple of the Lord itself contained two altars, on whose horns the blood of the sacrifice was sprinkled. The blood of the sin-offering was put not merely

¹ Cf. *Plinii hist. n.* xxxvii. 15: *crustæ adamantis expetuntur a sculptoribus ferroque includuntur, nullam non duritiem ex facili excarantes.*

on the altar of burnt-offering, but also on the horns of the altar of incense, Lev. iv. 7, 18, xvi. 16. Nor is the second reason conclusive, since there is no difficulty in taking it to be the altars of Jahveh as defiled by idolatry. This, indeed, we must do, since Josiah had destroyed the altars of the false gods, whereas here the altars are spoken of as existing monuments of idolatry. The question, in how far the sin of Judah is ineffaceably engraven upon the horns of her altars, is variously answered by comm., and the answer depends on the view taken of ver. 2, which is itself disputed. It is certainly wrong to join ver. 2 as protasis with ver. 3 as apodosis, for it is incompatible with the beginning of ver. 3, הָרָרִי. Ew. therefore proposes to attach "my mountain in the field" to ver. 2, and to change הָרָרִי into הָרָרִי: upon the high hills, the mountains in the field—a manifest makeshift. Umbr. translates: As their children remember their altars . . . so will I my mountain in the field, thy possession . . . give for a prey; and makes out the sense to be: "in proportion to the strength and ineffaceableness of the impressions, such as are to be found in the children of idolatrous fathers, must be the severity of the consequent punishment from God." But if this were the force, then כֵּן could not possibly be omitted before the apodosis; apart altogether from the suddenness of such a transition from the sins of the people (ver. 1) to the sins of the children.—Ver. 2 is plainly meant to be a fuller and clearer disclosure of the sins written on the tables of Judah's heart, finding therein its point of connection with ver. 1. The verse has no *verbum finit.*, and besides it is a question whether "their children" is subject or object to "remember." The rule, that in calm discourse the subject follows the verb, does not decide for us; for the object very frequently follows next, and in the case of the infinitive the subject is often not mentioned, but must be supplied from the context. Here we may either translate: as their sons remember (Chald. and Jerome), or: as they remember their sons. As already said, the first translation gives no sense in keeping with the context. Rashi, Kimchi, J. D. Mich., Maur., Hitz. follow the other rendering: as they remember their children, so do they their altars. On this view, the *verb. fin.* יִזְכְּרוּ is supplied from the *infin.* יִזְכֹּר, and the two accusatives are placed alongside,

as in Isa. lxvi. 3 after the participle, without the particle of comparison demanded by the sense; cf. also Ps. xcii. 8, Job xxvii. 14. Näg. calls this construction very harsh; but it has analogues in the passages cited, and gives the very suitable sense: Their altars, Astartes, are as dear to them as their children. Hitz. takes the force to be this: "Whenever they think of their children, they remember, and cannot but remember, the altars to whose horns the blood of their sacrificed children adheres. And so in the case of a green tree upon the heights; *i.e.* when they light upon such an one, they cannot help calling to mind the Asherahs, which were such trees." But this interpretation is clearly wrong; for it takes the second clause על עץ as object to זָכַר, which is grammatically quite indefensible, and which is besides incompatible with the order of the words. Besides, the idea that they remember the altars because the blood of their children stuck to the horns of them, is put into the words; and the putting of it in is made possible only by Hitz.'s arbitrarily separating "their Astartes" from "their altars," and from the specification of place in the next clause: "by the green tree." The words mean: As they remember their children, so do they their altars and Asherahs by every green tree. The co-ordination of Asherahs and altars makes it clear that it is not sacrifices to Moloch that are meant by altars; for the Asherahs have no connection with the worship of Moloch. Näg.'s assertions, that אֲשֵׁרִים is the name for male images of Baal, and that there can be no doubt of their connection with child-slaughtering Moloch-worship, are unfounded and erroneous. The word means images of Asherah; see on 1 Kings xiv. 23 and Deut. xvi. 21. Graf says that על עץ ר' does not belong to "altars and Asherahs," because in that case it would need to be פָּתַח עץ ר', as in ii. 20, iii. 6, 13, Isa. lvii. 5, Deut. xii. 2, 2 Kings xvi. 4, xvii. 10, but that it depends on זָכַר. This remark is not correctly expressed, and Graf himself gives על a local force, thus: by every green tree and on every high hill they think of the altars and Asherahs. This local relation cannot be spoken of as a "dependence" upon the verb; nor does it necessarily exclude the connection with "altars and Asherahs," since we can quite well think of the altars and Asherahs as being by or beside every green tree and on the hills. At the same time, we hold

it better to connect the local reference with the verb, because it gives the stronger sense,—namely, that the Jews not merely think of the altars and Asherahs which are by every green tree and upon the high hills, but that by every green tree and on the high hills they think of their altars and Asherahs, even when there are no such things to be seen there. Thus we can now answer the question before thrown out, in what respects the sin was ineffaceably engraven on the horns of the altar: It was because the altars and images of the false gods had entwined themselves as closely about their hearts as their children, so that they brought the sin of their idolatry along with their sacrifices to the altars of Jahveh. The offerings which they bring, in this state of mind, to the Lord are defiled by idolatry and carry their sins to the altar, so that, in the blood which is sprinkled on its horns, the sins of the offerers are poured out on the altar. Hence it appears unmistakeably that ver. 1 does not deal with the consciousness of sin as not yet cancelled or forgiven, but with the sin of idolatry, which, ineradicably implanted in the hearts of the people and indelibly recorded before God on the horns of the altar, calls down God's wrath in punishment as announced in vers. 3 and 4.

"My mountain in the field" is taken by most comm. as a name for Jerusalem or Zion. But it is a question whether the words are vocative, or whether they are accusative; and so with the rest of the objects, "thy substance," etc., dependent on אֲנִי. If we take them to be vocative, so that Jerusalem is addressed, then we must hold "thy substance" and "thy treasures" to be the goods and gear of Jerusalem, while the city will be regarded as representative of the kingdom, or rather of the population of Judah. But the second clause, "thy high places in all thy borders," does not seem to be quite in keeping with this, and still less ver. 4: thou shalt discontinue from thine inheritance, which is clearly spoken of the people of Judah. Furthermore, if Jerusalem were the party addressed, we should expect feminine suffixes, since Jerusalem is everywhere else personified as a woman, as the daughter of Zion. We therefore hold "my mountain" to be accusative, and, under "the mountain of Jahveh in the field," understand, not the city of Jerusalem, but Mount Zion as the site of the temple, the

mountain of the house of Jahveh, Isa. ii. 3, Zech. viii. 3, Ps. xxiv. 3. The addition בַּשָּׂדֶה may not be translated: with the field (Ges., de W., Näg.); for בַּ denotes the means or instrument, or an accessory accompanying the principal thing or action and subservient to it (Ew. § 217, f. 3), but not the mere external surroundings or belongings. Näg.'s assertion, that בַּ, amidst = together with, is due to an extreme position in an empirical mode of treating language. בַּשָּׂדֶה means "in the field," and "mountain in the field" is like the "rock of the plain," xxi. 13. But whether it denotes "the clear outstanding loftiness of the mountain, so that for it we might say: My mountain commanding a wide prospect" (Umbr., Graf), is a question. שָׂדֶה, field, denotes not the fruitful fields lying round Mount Zion, but, like "field of the Amalekites," Gen. xiv. 7, "field of Edom" (Gen. xxxii. 4), the land or country; see on Ezek. xxi. 2; and so here: my mountain in the land (of Judah or Israel). The land is spoken of as a field, as a level or plain (xxi. 13), in reference to the spiritual height of the temple mountain or mountain of God above the whole land; not in reference to the physical pre-eminence of Zion, which cannot be meant, since Zion is considerably exceeded in height by the Mount of Olives on the east, and by the southern heights of the highlands of Judah. By its choice to be the site of the Lord's throne amid His people, Mount Zion was exalted above the whole land as is a mountain in the field; and it is hereafter to be exalted above all mountains (Isa. ii. 2; Mic. iv. 1), while the whole land is to be lowered to the level of a plain (Zech. xiv. 10). The following objects are ranged alongside as asyndetons: the Mount Zion as His peculiar possession and the substance of the people, all their treasures will the Lord give for a prey to the enemy. "Thy high places" is also introduced, with rhetorical effect, without copula. "Thy high places," i.e. the heights on which Judah had practised idolatry, will He give up, for their sins' sake, throughout the whole land. The whole clause, from "thy high places" to "thy borders," is an apposition to the first half of the verse, setting forth the reason why the whole land, the mountain of the Lord, and all the substance of the people, are to be delivered to the enemy; because, viz., the whole land has been defiled by idolatry. Hitz. wrongly

translates חַטָּאת for sin, *i.e.* for a sin-offering.—Ver. 4. And thou shalt discontinue from thine inheritance. There is in שָׁמַרְתָּהּ an allusion to the law in Ex. xxiii. 11, to let the ground lie untilled in the seventh year, and in Deut. xv. 2, to let loans go, not to exact from one's neighbour what has been lent to him. Because Judah has transgressed this law, the Lord will compel the people to let go their hold of their inheritance, *i.e.* He will cast them out of it. וְיָרֵךְ seems strange, interposed between the verb and the “from thine inheritance” dependent on it. The later Greek translators (for the entire passage vers. 1–4 is wanting in the LXX.) render it $\mu\acute{o}\nu\eta$, and Jerome *sola*. Ew. therefore conjectures לְבָרְךָ , but without due reason, since the translation is only a free rendering of: and that by thyself. J. D. Mich., Gr., and Næg. propose to read וְיָרֵךְ , on the ground of the connection wrongly made between שָׁמַרְתָּהּ and וְיָרֵךְ , to let go his hand, Deut. xv. 2, given in Ges. *Lex. s.v.* For וְיָרֵךְ in this case is not object to שָׁמַרְתָּהּ , but belongs to מִשְׁעָה , hand-lending; and in Deut. xv. 3 וְיָרֵךְ is subject to מִשְׁעָה , the hand shall quit hold. וְיָרֵךְ sig. and that by thee, *i.e.* by thine own fault; cf. Ezek. xxii. 16. Meaning: by thine own fault thou must needs leave behind thee thine inheritance, thy land, and serve thine enemies in a foreign land. On the last clause, “for a fire,” etc., cf. xv. 14, where is also discussed the relation of the present vers. 3 and 4 to xv. 13, 14. For ever burns the fire, *i.e.* until the sin is blotted out by the punishment, and for ever inasmuch as the wicked are to be punished for ever.

Vers. 5–27. FURTHER CONFIRMATION OF THIS ANNOUNCEMENT IN GENERAL REFLECTIONS CONCERNING THE SOURCES OF RUIN AND OF WELL-BEING.—This portion falls into two halves: *a.* On the sources of ruin and of well-being (vers. 5–18); *b.* On the way to life (vers. 18–27). The reflections of the first half show the curse of confidence in man and the blessings of confidence in God the Lord, vers. 5–13; to which is joined, vers. 14–18, a prayer of the prophet for deliverance from his enemies.

Ver. 5. “Thus saith Jahveh: Cursed is the man that trusteth in man and maketh flesh his arm, while his heart departeth from Jahveh. Ver. 6. He shall be as a destitute man in the wilderness,

and shall not see that good cometh; he shall inhabit parched places in the desert, a salt land and uninhabited. Ver. 7. Blessed is the man that trusteth in Jahveh, and whose trust Jahveh is. Ver. 8. He shall be as a tree planted by the water, and shall by the river spread out his roots, and shall not fear when heat cometh; his leaves shall be green, and in the year of drought he shall not have care, neither cease from yielding fruit. Ver. 9. Deceitful is the heart above all, and corrupt it is, who can know it? Ver. 10. I Jahveh search the heart and try the reins, even to give every one according to his way, according to the fruit of his doings. Ver. 11. The partridge hatcheth the egg which it laid not; there is that getteth riches and not by right. In the midst of his days they forsake him, and at his end he shall be a fool. Ver. 12. Thou throne of glory, loftiness from the beginning, thou place of our sanctuary. Ver. 13. Thou hope of Israel, Jahveh, all that forsake Thee come to shame. They that depart from me shall be written in the earth, for they have forsaken the fountain of living water, Jahveh."

Trust in man and departure from God brings only mischief (vers. 5 and 6); trust in the Lord brings blessing only (vers. 7, 8). These truths are substantiated in vers. 9-13, and elucidated by illustrations.—Ver. 5. Trust in man is described according to the nature of it in the second clause: he that maketh flesh his arm, *i.e.* his strength. Flesh, the antithesis to spirit (cf. Isa. xxxi. 3), sets forth the vanity and perishableness of man and of all other earthly beings; cf. besides Isa. xxxi. 3, also Job x. 4, Ps. lvi. 5. In ver. 6 we are shown the curse of this trusting in man. One who so does is as עֵרְעָר in the steppe. This word, which is found beside only in Ps. cii. 18, and in the form עֵרְעִיר Jer. xlviii. 6, is rendered by the old translators by means of words which mean desert plants or thorny growths (LXX. ἀγριομυρίκη; Jerome, *myrice*; similarly in Chald. and Syr.); so Ew., arid shrub; Umbr., a bare tree. All these renderings are merely guesses from the context; and the latter, indeed, tells rather against than for a bush or tree, since the following clause, "he shall not see," can be said only of a man. So in Ps. cii. 18, where we hear of the prayer of the עֵרְעָר. The word is from עָרַר, to be naked, made bare, and denotes the

destitute man, who lacks all the means of subsistence. It is not the homeless or outcast (Graf, Hitz.). He shall not see, *i.e.* experience that good comes, *i.e.* he shall have no prosperity, but shall inhabit "burnt places," tracts in the desert parched by the sun's heat. Salt-land, *i.e.* quite unfruitful land; cf. Deut. xxix. 22. **לֹא תֵשֵׁב** is a relative clause: and which is not inhabited=uninhabitable. Dwelling in parched tracts and salt regions is a figure for the total want of the means of life (equivalent to the German: *auf keinen grünen Zweig kommen*).—Vers. 7 and 8 show the companion picture, the blessings of trusting in the Lord. "That trusteth in Jahveh" is strengthened by the synonymous "whose trust Jahveh is;" cf. Ps. xl. 5. The portrayal of the prosperity of him that trusts in the Lord is an extension of the picture in Ps. i. 3, 4, of the man that hath his delight in the law of the Lord. The form **יִבֵּל** is *ἀπ. λεγ.*, equivalent to **יִבְּלַי**, water-brook, which, moreover, occurs only in the plural (**יִבְּלַיִם**), Isa. xxx. 25, xlv. 4. He spreads forth his roots by the brook, to gain more and more strength for growth. The *Chet.* **יִרָא** is imperf. from **יָרָא**, and is to be read **יִרְאֵה**. The *Keri* gives **יִרְאֵה** from **יָרָא**, corresponding to the **יִרְאֵה** in ver. 6. The *Chet.* is unqualifiedly right, and **יִרָא לֹא** corresponds to **לֹא יִרְאֵה**. As to **בְּצַרַת**, see on xiv. 1. He has no fear for the heat in the year of drought, because the brook by which he grows does not dry up.

To bring this truth home to the people, the prophet in ver. 9 discloses the nature of the human heart, and then shows in ver. 10 how God, as the Searcher of hearts, requites man according to his conduct. Trust in man has its seat in the heart, which seeks thereby to secure to itself success and prosperity. But the heart of man is more deceitful, cunning than all else (**עָקֵב**, from the denom. **עָקַב**, to deal treacherously). **אֲנִישׁ**, lit. dangerously sick, incurable, cf. xv. 18; here, sore wounded by sin, corrupt or depraved. Who can know it? *i.e.* fathom its nature and corruptness. Therefore a man must not trust the suggestions and illusions of his own heart.—Ver. 10. Only God searches the heart and tries the reins, the seat of the most hidden emotions and feelings, cf. xi. 20, xii. 3, and deals accordingly, requiting each according to his life and his doings. The **י** before **לֵהֲתָה**, which is wanting in many MSS. and

is not expressed by the old translators, is not to be objected to. It serves to separate the aim in view from the rest, and to give it the prominence due to an independent thought; cf. Ew. § 340, *b*. As to the truth itself, cf. xxxii. 19. With this is joined the common saying as to the partridge, ver. 11. The aim is not to specify greed as another root of the corruption of the heart, or to give another case of false confidence in the earthly (Näg., Graf); but to corroborate by a common saying, whose truth should be obvious to the people, the greater truth, that God, as Searcher of hearts, requites each according to his works. The proverb ran: He that gains riches, and that by wrong, *i.e.* in an unjust, dishonourable manner, is like a partridge which hatches eggs it has not laid. In the Proverbs we often find comparisons, as here, without the *?* *similit.*: a gainer of riches is a partridge; cf. Prov. xxv. 14, xxvi. 28, xxviii. 15. צִיִּי, the crier, denotes here and 1 Sam. xxvi. 20 the partridge (*Rephuhn*, properly *Röphuhn* from *röpen* = *rufen*, to call or cry); a bird yet found in plenty in the tribe of Judah; cf. Robinson, *Palestine*. All other interpretations are arbitrary. It is true that natural history has not proved the fact of this peculiarity of the partridge, on which the proverb was founded; testimonies as to this habit of the creature are found only in certain Church fathers, and these were probably deduced from this passage (cf. Winer, *bibl. R. W.*, art. *Rebhuhn*). But the proverb assumes only the fact that such was the widespread popular belief amongst the Israelites, without saying anything as to the correctness of it. "Hatcheth and layeth not" are to be taken relatively. צִיִּי, the Targum word in Job xxxix. 14 for צִיִּי, *fovere*, sig. hatch, lit. to hold eggs close together, cover eggs; see on Isa. xxxiv. 15. יָלַד, to bring forth, here of laying eggs. As to the *Kametz* in both words, see Ew. § 100, *c*. The point of the comparison, that the young hatched out of another bird's eggs forsake the mother, is brought out in the application of the proverb. Hence is to be explained "forsake him:" the riches forsake him, instead of: are lost to him, vanish, in the half of his days, *i.e.* in the midst of life; and at the end of his life he shall be a fool, *i.e.* the folly of his conduct shall fully appear.

In vers. 12 and 13 Jeremiah concludes this meditation with

an address to the Lord, which the Lord corroborates by His own word.—Ver. 12 is taken by many ancient comm. as a simple statement: a throne of glory, loftiness from the beginning, is the place of our sanctuary. This is grammatically defensible; but the view preferred by almost all moderns, that it is an apostrophe, is more in keeping with the tension of feeling in the discourse. The “place of our sanctuary” is the temple as the spot where God sits throned amidst His people, not the heaven as God’s throne: Isa. lxvi. 1. This the pronoun *our* does not befit, since heaven is never spoken of as the sanctuary of Israel. Hence we must refer both the preceding phrases to the earthly throne of God in the temple on Zion. The temple is in xiv. 21 called throne of the *כבוד יהוה*, because in it Jahveh is enthroned above the ark; Ex. xxv. 22; Ps. lxxx. 2, xcix. 1. *מֵרֵאשִׁית* has here the sig. of *מֵרֵאשִׁית*, Isa. xl. 21, xli. 4, 26, xlviii. 16: from the beginning onwards, from all time. Heaven as the proper throne of God is often called *מְרוֹם*, loftiness; cf. Isa. lvii. 15, Ps. vii. 8; but so also is Mount Zion as God’s earthly dwelling-place; cf. Ezek. xvii. 23, xx. 40. Zion is called loftiness from the beginning, *i.e.* from immemorial time, as having been from eternity chosen to be the abode of God’s glory upon earth; cf. Ex. xv. 17, where in the song of Moses by the Red Sea, Mount Zion is pointed out prophetically as the place of the abode of Jahveh, inasmuch as it had been set apart thereto by the sacrifice of Isaac; see the expos. of Ex. xv. 17. Nor does *מֵרֵאשִׁית* always mean the beginning of the world, but in Isa. xli. 26 and xlviii. 16 it is used of the beginning of the things then under discussion. From the place of Jahveh’s throne amongst His people, ver. 13, the discourse passes to Him who is there enthroned: Thou hope of Israel, Jahveh (cf. xiv. 8), through whom Zion and the temple had attained to that eminence. The praise of God’s throne prepares only the transition to praise of the Lord, who there makes known His glory. The address to Jahveh: Thou hope of Israel, is not a prayer directed to Him, so as to justify the objection against the vocative acceptance of ver. 12, that it were unseemly to address words of prayer to the temple. The juxtaposition of the sanctuary as the throne of God and of Jahveh, the hope of Israel, involves only that the forsaking of the sanctuary on

Zion is a forsaking of Jahveh, the hope of Israel. It needs hardly be observed that this adverting to the temple as the seat of Jahveh's throne, whence help may come, is not in contradiction to the warning given in vii. 4, 9 f. against false confidence in the temple as a power present to protect. That warning is aimed against the idolaters, who believed that God's presence was so bound up with the temple, that the latter was beyond the risk of harm. The Lord is really present in the temple on Zion only to those who draw near Him in the confidence of true faith. All who forsake the Lord come to shame. This word the Lord confirms through the mouth of the prophet in the second part of the verse. יִסְיִר, according to the *Chet.*, is a substantive from סִיר, formed like יָרִיב from רִיב (cf. Ew. § 162, a); the *Keri* יִסְיִר is *partic.* from סִיר with *cop.*—an uncalled-for conjecture. My departers = those that depart from me, shall be written in the earth, in the loose earth, where writing speedily disappears. נִסְיִר, synonymous with עָפַר, cf. Job xiv. 8, suggesting death. The antithesis to this is not the graving in rock, Job xix. 24, but being written in the book of life; cf. Dan. xii. 1 with Ex. xxxii. 32. In this direction the grounding clause points: they have forsaken the fountain of living water (ii. 13); for without water one must pine and perish.—On this follows directly,

Vers. 14-18. *The prophet's prayer for rescue from his enemies.*—Ver. 14. "Heal me, Jahveh, that I may be healed; help me, that I may be holpen, for Thou art my praise. Ver. 15. Behold, they say to me, Where is the word of Jahveh? let it come, now. Ver. 16. I have not withdrawn myself from being a shepherd after Thee, neither wished for the day of trouble, Thou knowest; that which went forth of my lips was open before Thy face. Ver. 17. Be not to me a confusion, my refuge art Thou in the day of evil. Ver. 18. Let my persecutors be put to shame, but let not me be put to shame; let them be confounded, but let not me be confounded; bring upon them the day of evil, and break them with a double breach."

The experience Jeremiah had had in his calling seemed to contradict the truth, that trust in the Lord brings blessing (ver. 7 ff.); for his preaching of God's word had brought him nothing but persecution and suffering. Therefore he prays the

Lord to remove this contradiction and to verify that truth in his case also. The prayer of ver. 14, "heal me," reminds one of Ps. vi. 3, xxx. 3. Thou art תְּחַלֵּתִי, the object of my praises; cf. Ps. lxxi. 6, Deut. x. 21.—The occasion for this prayer is furnished by the attacks of his enemies, who ask in scorn what then has become of that which he proclaims as the word of the Lord, why it does not come to pass. Hence we see that the discourse, of which this complaint is the conclusion, was delivered before the first invasion of Judah by the Chaldeans. So long as his announcements were not fulfilled, the unbelieving were free to persecute him as a false prophet (cf. Deut. xviii. 22), and to give out that his prophecies were inspired by his own spite against his people. He explains, on the contrary, that in his calling he has neither acted of his own accord, nor wished for misfortune to the people, but that he has spoken by the inspiration of God alone. 'לֹא אֶצְטִי וְגו' cannot mean: I have not pressed myself forward to follow Thee as shepherd, *i.e.* pressed myself forward into Thy service in vain and overweening self-conceit (Umbr.). For although this sense would fall very well in with the train of thought, yet it cannot be grammatically justified. אֶצְטִי, press, press oneself on to anything, is construed with לְ, cf. Josh. x. 13; with מִן it can only mean: press oneself away from a thing. מִרְעָה may stand for מִהְיוֹת רֹעֶה, cf. xlviii. 2, 1 Sam. xv. 23, 1 Kings xv. 13: from being a shepherd after Thee, *i.e.* I have not withdrawn myself from following after Thee as a shepherd. Against this rendering the fact seems to weigh, that usually it is not the prophets, but only the kings and princes, that are entitled the shepherds of the people; cf. xxiii. 1. For this reason, it would appear, Hitz. and Graf have taken רָעָה in the sig. to seek after a person or thing, and have translated: I have not pressed myself away from keeping after Thee, or from being one that followed Thee faithfully. For this appeal is made to places like Prov. xiii. 20, xxviii. 7, Ps. xxxvii. 3, where רָעָה does mean to seek after a thing, to take pleasure in it. But in this sig. רָעָה is always construed with the *accus.* of the thing or person, not with אֶצְטִי, as here. Nor does it by any means follow, from the fact of shepherds meaning usually kings or rulers, that the idea of "shepherd" is exhausted in ruling and governing

people. According to Ps. xxiii. 1, Jahveh is the shepherd of the godly, who feeds them in green pastures and leads them to the refreshing water, who revives their soul, etc. In this sense prophets, too, feed the people, if they, following the Lord as chief shepherd, declare God's word to the people. We cannot in any case abide by Näg.'s rendering, who, taking רָץ in its literal sense, puts the meaning thus: I have not pressed myself away from being a shepherd, in order to go after Thee. For the assumption that Jeremiah had, before his call, been, like Amos, a herd of cattle, contradicts ch. i. 1; nor from the fact, that the cities of the priests and of the Levites were provided with grazing fields (מִנְשִׁים), does it at all follow that the priests themselves tended their flocks. "The day of trouble," the ill, disastrous day, is made out by Näg. to be the day of his entering upon the office of prophet—a view that needs no refutation. It is the day of destruction for Jerusalem and Judah, which Jeremiah had foretold. When Näg. says: "He need not have gone out of his way to affirm that he did not desire the day of disaster for the whole people," he has neglected to notice that Jeremiah is here defending himself against the charges of his enemies, who inferred from his prophecies of evil that he found a pleasure in his people's calamity, and wished for it to come. For the truth of his defence, Jeremiah appeals to the omniscience of God: "Thou knowest it." That which goes from my lips, *i.e.* the word that came from my lips, was נִבְּאָה פְּנֶיךָ, before or over against Thy face, *i.e.* manifest to Thee.—Ver. 17. On this he founds his entreaty that the Lord will not bring him to confusion and shame by leaving his prophecies as to Judah unfulfilled, and gives his encouragement to pray in the clause: Thou art my refuge in the day of evil, in evil times; cf. xv. 11. May God rather put his persecutors to shame and confusion by the accomplishment of the calamity foretold, ver. 18. תְּהִיָּה pointed with *Tsere* instead of the abbreviation תְּהִי, cf. Ew. § 224, c. הִבֵּיָה is *imperat.* instead of הִבֵּיָה, as in 1 Sam. xx. 40, where the Masoretes have thus pointed even the הִבֵּיָה. But in the Hiph. the *i* has in many cases maintained itself against the *ē*, so that we are neither justified in regarding the form before us as *scriptio plena*, nor yet in reading הִבֵּיָה.—Break them with a double breach, *i.e.* let the disaster fall on them

doubly. "A double breach," pr. something doubled in the way of breaking or demolition. שַׁבְּרוֹן is not subordinated to מִשְׁנָה in *stat. constr.*, but is added as *accus.* of kind; cf. Ew. § 287, *h.*

Vers. 19-27. *Of the hallowing of the Sabbath.*—Ver. 19. "Thus said Jahveh unto me: Go and stand in the gate of the sons of the people, by which the kings of Judah come in and by which they go out, and in all gates of Jerusalem, Ver. 20. And say unto them: Hear the word of Jahveh, ye kings of Judah, and all Judah, and all inhabitants of Jerusalem, that go in by these gates: Ver. 21. Thus hath Jahveh said: Take heed for your souls, and bear no burden on the Sabbath-day, and bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem. Ver. 22. And carry forth no burden out of your houses on the Sabbath-day, and do no work, and hallow the Sabbath-day, as I commanded your fathers. Ver. 23. But they hearkened not, neither inclined their ear, and made their neck stiff, that they might not hear nor take instruction. Ver. 24. But if ye will really hearken unto me, saith Jahveh, to bring in no burden by the gates of the city on the Sabbath-day, and to hallow the Sabbath-day, to do no work thereon, Ver. 25. Then shall there go through the gates of the city kings and princes, who sit on the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they and their princes, the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and this city shall be inhabited for ever. Ver. 26. And they shall come from the cities of Judah and the outskirts of Jerusalem, from the land of Benjamin and from the lowland, from the hill-country and from the south, that bring burnt-offering and slain-offering, meat-offering and incense, and that bring praise into the house of Jahveh. Ver. 27. But if ye hearken not to me, to hallow the Sabbath-day, and not to bear a burden, and to come into the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath-day, then will I kindle fire in her gates, so that it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and not be quenched."

The introduction, ver. 19, shows that this passage has, in point of form, but a loose connection with what precedes. It is, however, not a distinct and independent prophecy; for it wants the heading, "The word of Jahveh which came," etc., proper to all the greater discourses. Besides, in point of

subject-matter, it may very well be joined with the preceding general reflections as to the springs of mischief and of well-being; inasmuch as it shows how the way of safety appointed to the people lies in keeping the decalogue, as exemplified in one of its fundamental precepts.—The whole passage contains only God's command to the prophet; but the execution of it, *i.e.* the proclamation to the people of what was commanded, is involved in the nature of the case. Jeremiah is to proclaim this word of the Lord in all the gates of Jerusalem, that it may be obeyed in them all. The locality of the gate of the sons of the people is obscure and difficult to determine, that by which the kings of Judah go and come. שַׁרְיָן seems to stand for שַׁרְיָן הָעָם, as the *Keri* would have it. In xxvi. 23 and 2 Kings xxiii. 6, "sons of the people" means the common people as opposed to the rich and the notables; in 2 Chron. xxxv. 5, 7 ff., the people as opposed to the priests and Levites, that is, the laity. The first sig. of the phrase seems here to be excluded by the fact, that the kings come and go by this gate; for there is not the smallest probability that a gate so used could have borne the name of "gate of the common people." But we might well pause to weigh the second sig. of the word, if we could but assume that it was a gate of the temple that was meant. Näg. concludes that it was so, on the ground that we know of no city gate through which only the kings and the dregs of the people were free to go, or the kings and the mass of their subjects, to the exclusion of the priests. But this does not prove his point; for we are not informed as to the temple, that the kings and the laity were permitted to go and come by one gate only, while the others were reserved for priests and Levites. Still it is much more likely that the principal entrance to the outer court of the temple should have obtained the name of "people's gate," or "laymen's gate," than that a city gate should have been so called; and that by that "people's gate" the kings also entered into the court of the temple, while the priests and Levites came and went by side gates which were more at hand for the court of the priests. Certainly Näg. is right when he further remarks, that the name was not one in general use, but must have been used by the priests only. On the other hand, there is nothing to support clearly the surmise

that the gate יסוד, 2 Chron. xxiii. 5, was so called; the east gate of the outer court is much more likely. We need not be surprised at the mention of this chief gate of the temple along with the city gates; for certainly there would be always a great multitude of people to be found at this gate, even if what Nüg. assumes were not the case, that by the sale and purchase of things used in the temple, this gate was the scene of a Sabbath-breaking trade. But if, with the majority of comm., we are to hold that by "people's gate" a city gate was meant, then we cannot determine which it was. Of the suppositions that it was the Benjamin-gate, or the well-gate, Neh. ii. 14 (Maur.), or the gate of the midst which led through the northern wall of Zion from the upper city into the lower city (Hitz.), or the water-gate, Neh. iii. 26 (Graf), each is as unfounded as another. From the plural: the kings of Judah (ver. 20), Hitz. infers that more kings than one were then existing alongside one another, and that thus the name must denote the members of the royal family. But his idea has been arbitrarily forced into the text. The gates of the city, as well as of the temple, did not last over the reign of but one king, ver. 21. הַשְׁמִיר בְּנַפְשֹׁתָם, to take heed for the souls, *i.e.* take care of the souls, so as not to lose life (cf. Mal. ii. 15), is a more pregnant construction than that with לָ, Deut. iv. 15, although it yields the same sense. Nüg. seeks erroneously to explain the phrase according to 2 Sam. xx. 10 (לִשְׁמֹר בַּחֶרֶב, take care against the sword) and Dent. xxiv. 8, where הַשְׁמִיר ought not to be joined at all with בָּנִיעַ. The bearing of burdens on the Sabbath, both into the city and out of one's house, seems to point most directly at market trade and business, cf. Neh. xiii. 15 ff., but is used only as one instance of the citizens' occupations; hence are appended the very words of the law: to do no work, Ex. xii. 16, xx. 10, Deut. v. 14, and: to hallow the Sabbath, namely, by cessation from all labour, cf. ver. 24. The remark in ver. 23, that the fathers have already transgressed God's law, is neither contrary to the aim in view, as Hitz. fancies, nor superfluous, but serves to characterize the transgression censured as an old and deeply-rooted sin, which God must at length punish unless the people cease therefrom. The description of the fathers' disobedience is a verbal repetition of vii. 26. The *Chet.* שָׁמַע cannot be a

participle, but is a clerical error for שָׁמַע (*infin. constr.* with *scriptio plena*), as in xi. 10 and xix. 15. See a similar error in ii. 25 and viii. 6. On "nor take instruction," cf. ii. 30.—In the next verses the observance of this commandment is enforced by a representation of the blessings which the hallowing of the Sabbath will bring to the people (vers. 24-26), and the curse upon its profanation (ver. 27). If they keep the Sabbath holy, the glory of the dynasty of David and the prosperity of the people will acquire permanence, and Jerusalem remain continually inhabited, and the people at large will bring thank-offerings to the Lord in His temple. Hitz., Graf, and Näg. take objection to the collocation: kings and princes (ver. 25), because princes do not sit on the throne of David, nor can they have other "princes" dependent on them, as we must assume from the "they and their princes." But although the וְשָׂרִים be wanting in the parallel, xxii. 4, yet this passage cannot be regarded as the standard; for whereas the discourse in chap. xxii. is addressed to the king, the present is to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, or rather the people of Judah. The וְשָׂרִים is subordinate to the kings, so that the sitting on the throne of David is to be referred only to the kings, the following וְשָׂרֵיהֶם helping further to define them. "Riding" is to be joined both with "in chariots" and "on horses," since רָכַב means either driving or riding. The driving and riding of the kings and their princes through the gates of Jerusalem is a sign of the undiminished splendour of the rule of David's race.—Ver. 26. Besides the blessing of the continuance of the Davidic monarchy, Jerusalem will also have to rejoice in the continued spiritual privilege of public worship in the house of the Lord. From the ends of the kingdom the people will come with offerings to the temple, to present thank-offerings for benefits received. The rhetorical enumeration of the various parts of the country appears again in xxxii. 44. The cities of Judah and the outskirts of Jerusalem denote the part of the country which bordered on Jerusalem; then we have the land of Benjamin, the northern province of the kingdom, and three districts into which the tribal domain of Judah was divided: the Shephelah in the west on the Mediterranean Sea, the hill-country, and the southland; see on Josh. xv. 21, 33, and 48. The desert of

Judah (Josh. xv. 61) is not mentioned, as being comprehended under the hill-country. The offerings are divided into two classes: bloody, burnt and slain offerings, and unbloody, meat-offerings and frankincense, which was strewed upon the meat-offering (Lev. ii. 1). The latter is not the incense-offering (Graf), which is not called *לְבֹנָה*, but *קְטֹרֶת*, cf. Ex. xxx. 7 ff., although frankincense was one of the ingredients of the incense prepared for burning (Ex. xxx. 34). These offerings they will bring as "praise-offering" into the house of the Lord. *תֹּדָה* is not here used for *זֶבַח תֹּדָה*, praise-offering, as one species of slain-offering, but is, as we see from xxxiii. 11, a general designation for the praise and thanks which they desire to express by means of the offerings specified.—Ver. 27. In the event of the continuance of this desecration of the Sabbath, Jerusalem is to be burnt up with fire, cf. xxi. 14, and, as regards the expressions used, Amos i. 14, Hos. viii. 14.

CHAP. XVIII.—XX.—THE FIGURES OF THE POTTER'S CLAY AND OF THE EARTHEN PITCHER.

These three chapters have the title common to all Jeremiah's discourses of the earlier period: The word which came to Jeremiah from Jahveh (xviii. 1). In them, bodied forth in two symbolical actions, are two discourses which are very closely related to one another in form and substance, and which may be regarded as one single prophecy set forth in words and actions. In them we find discussed Judah's ripeness for the judgment, the destruction of the kingdom, and the speediness with which that judgment was to befall. The subject-matter of this discourse-compilation falls into two parts: chap. xviii. and chap. xix. and xx.; that is, into the accounts of two symbolical actions, together with the interpretation of them and their application to the people (chap. xviii. 1–17 and chap. xix. 1–13), followed immediately by notices as to the reception which these announcements met on the part of the people and their rulers (chap. xviii. 18–23, and chap. xix. 14–xx. 18). In the first discourse, that illustrated by the figure of a potter who remodels a misshapen vessel, chap. xviii., the prophet inculcates on the people the truth that the Lord has power to do according

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AND THE COMPLAINT OF THE PROPHET AGAINST HIS ADVERSARIES.—The figure of the potter who remodels a misshapen vessel (vers. 2-4). The interpretation of this (vers. 5-10), and its application to degenerate Israel (vers. 11-17). The reception of the discourse by the people, and Jeremiah's cry to the Lord (vers. 18-23).

Vers. 2-10. *The emblem and its interpretation.*—Ver. 2. "Arise and go down into the potter's house; there will I cause thee to hear my words. Ver. 3. And I went down into the potter's house; and, behold, he wrought on the wheels. Ver. 4. And the vessel was marred, that he wrought in clay, in the hand of the potter; then he made again another vessel of it, as seemed good to the potter to make. Ver. 5. Then came the word of Jahveh to me, saying: Ver. 6. Cannot I do with you as this potter, house of Israel? saith Jahveh. Behold, as the clay in the hand of the potter, so are ye in mine hand, house of Israel. Ver. 7. Now I speak concerning a people and kingdom, to root it out and pluck up and destroy it. Ver. 8. But if that people turns from its wickedness, against which I spake, then it repents me of the evil which I thought to do it. Ver. 9. And now I speak concerning a people and a kingdom, to build and to plant it. Ver. 10. If it do that which is evil in mine eyes, so that it hearkens not unto my voice, then it repents me of the good which I said I would do unto it."

By God's command Jeremiah is to go and see the potter's treatment of the clay, and to receive thereafter God's interpretation of the same. Here he has set before his eyes that which suggests a comparison of man to the clay and of God to the potter, a comparison that frequently occurred to the Hebrews, and which had been made to appear in the first formation of man (cf. Job x. 9, xxxiii. 6, Isa. xxix. 16, xlv. 9, lxiv. 7). This is done that he may forcibly represent to the people, by means of the emblem, the power of the Lord to do according to His will with all nations, and so with Israel too. From the "go down," we gather that the potteries of Jerusalem lay in a valley near the city. סִנְיָוִת are the round frames by means of which the potter moulded his vessels. This sig. of the word is well approved here; but in Ex. i. 16, where too it is found, the meaning is doubtful, and it is a question whether the derivation

is from **אָפֿן** or from **אָפֿן**, wheel. The *perfecta consec.* **וְנִשְׁתַּח** and **וְיָצַב** designate, taken in connection with the participle **עֹשֶׂה**, actions that were possibly repeated: "and if the vessel was spoilt, he made it over again;" cf. Ew. § 342, b. **עֹשֶׂה בַּחֲמֶר**, working in clay, of the material in which men work in order to make something of it; cf. Ex. xxxi. 4.¹

In vers. 6-10 the Lord discloses to the prophet the truth lying in the potter's treatment of the clay. The power the potter has over the clay to remould, according to his pleasure, the vessel he had formed from it if it went wrong; the same power God possesses over the people of Israel. This unlimited power of God over mankind is exercised according to man's conduct, not according to a *decretum absolutum* or unchangeable determination. If he pronounces a people's overthrow or ruin, and if that people turn from its wickedness, He repeals His decree (ver. 7 f.); and conversely, if He promises a people welfare and prosperity, and if that people turn away from Him to wickedness, then too He changes His resolve to do good to it (ver. 9 f.). Inasmuch as He is even now making His decree known by the mouth of the prophet, it follows that the accom-

¹ Instead of **בַּחֲמֶר** several *codd.* and *editt.* have **כַּחֲמֶר**, as in ver. 6, to which Ew. and Hitz. both take objection, so that they delete **כַּחֲמֶר** (Ew.) or **בִּיר הַיִּצִּיר** (Hitz.) as being glosses, since the words are not in the LXX. The attempts of Umbr. and Næg. to obtain a sense for **בַּחֲמֶר** are truly of such a kind as only to strengthen the suspicion of spuriousness. Umbr., who is followed by Graf, expounds: "as the clay in the hand of the potter does;" whereto Hitz. justly replies: "but is then the (failure) solely its own doing?" Næg. will have **כ** to be the *verit.*: the vessel was marred, as clay in the hand of the potter, in which case the **כַּחֲמֶר** still interrupts. But the failure of the attempts to make a good sense of **כַּחֲמֶר** does in no respect justify the uncritical procedure of Ew. and Hitz. in deleting the word without considering that the reading is by no means established, since not only do the most important and correct editions and a great number of *codd.* read **בַּחֲמֶר**, but Aquila, Theodot., the Chald. and Syr. give this reading; Norzi and Houbig. call it *lectio accuratiorum codicum*, and the Masora on ver. 6 and Job x. 9 confirms it. Cf. de Rossi *variar lectt. ad h. l.* and the critical remarks in the *Biblia Ital.* by J. H. Michaelis, according to which **כַּחֲמֶר** plainly made its way into the present verse from ver. 6 by the error of a copyist; and it can only be from his prejudice in favour of the LXX. that Hitz. pronounces **כַּחֲמֶר** original, as being "the reading traditionally in use."

plishment of Jeremiah's last utterances is conditioned by the impression God's word makes on men. רָנַע, *adv.*, in the moment, forthwith, and when repeated = now . . . now, now . . . again. Näg. maintains that the arrangement here is paratactic, so that the רָנַע does not belong to the nearest verb, but to the main idea, *i.e.* to the apodosis in this case. The remark is just; but the word does not mean suddenly, but immediately, and the sense is: when I have spoken against a people, and this people repents, then immediately I let it repent me. עַל נַחֵם as in Joel ii. 13, etc. With "to pluck up," etc., "to build," etc., cf. i. 10. "Against which I spake," ver. 8, belongs to "that people," and seems as if it might be dispensed with; but is not therefore spurious because the LXX. have omitted it. For הָרָעָה the *Keri* has הָרַעַע, the most usual form, cf. vii. 30, Num. xxxii. 13, Judg. ii. 11, etc.; but the *Chet.* is called for by the following הַטּוֹבָה and מִרְעָתָהּ. לְהֵיטִיב הַטּוֹבָה, to show kindness, cf. Num. x. 32.

The emblematical interpretation of the potter with the clay lays a foundation for the prophecy that follows, vers. 11–17, in which the people are told that it is only by reason of their stiffnecked persistency in wickedness that they render threatened judgment certain, whereas by return to their God they might prevent the ruin of the kingdom.

Vers. 11–17. *Application of the emblem to Judah.*—Ver. 11. "And now speak to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying: Thus hath Jahveh said: Behold, I frame against you evil and devise against you a device. Return ye, now, each from his evil way, and better your ways and your doings. Ver. 12. But they say: There is no use! For our imaginations will we follow, and each do the stubbornness of his evil heart. Ver. 13. Therefore thus hath Jahveh said: Ask now among the heathen! who hath heard the like? A very horrible thing hath the virgin of Israel done! Ver. 14. Does the snow of Lebanon cease from the rock of the field? or do strange, cold trickling waters dry up? Ver. 15. For my people hath forgotten me; to the vanity they offer odours; they have made them to stumble upon their ways, the everlasting paths, to walk in by-paths, a way not cast up. Ver. 16. To make their land a dismay, a perpetual hissing, every one

that passeth thereby shall be astonished and shake his head. Ver. 17. Like the east wind I will scatter them before the enemy; with the back and not with the face will I look upon them in the day of their ruin."

In vers. 11 and 12 what was said at ver. 6 ff. is applied to Judah. יִצַּר, form in sense of prepare (cf. Isa. xxii. 11, xxxvii. 26), is chosen with special reference to the potter (יֹצֵר). מַחֲשָׁבָה, the thought, design, here in virtue of the parallelism: evil plot, as often both with and without רָעָה; cf. Esth. viii. 3, 5, ix. 25, Ezek. xxxviii. 10. The call to repentance runs much as do xxxv. 15 and vii. 3.—But this call the people reject disdainfully, replying that they are resolved to abide by their evil courses. וְאָמְרוּ, not: they said, but: they say; the *perf. consec.* of the action repeating itself at the present time; cf. Ew. 342, b. 1. נֹאֲשׁ as in ii. 25; on "stubbornness of their evil heart," cf. iii. 17. By this answer the prophet makes them condemn themselves out of their own mouth; cf. Isa. xxviii. 15, xxx. 10 f.—Ver. 13. Such obduracy is unheard of amongst the peoples; cf. a like idea in ii. 10 f. שְׁעָרָה = שְׁעָרָה, v. 30. מְאֹד belongs to the verb: horrible things hath Israel very much done = very horrible things have they done. The idea is strengthened by Israel's being designated a virgin (see on xiv. 17). One could hardly believe that a virgin could be guilty of such barefaced and determined wickedness. In ver. 14 f. the public conduct is further described; and first, it is illustrated by a picture drawn from natural history, designed to fill the people with shame for their unnatural conduct. But the significance of the picture is disputed. The questions have a negative force: does it forsake? = it does not forsake. The force of the first question is conditioned by the view taken of מַצִּיר שְׂרִי; and שְׂרִי may be either genitive to צֹר, or it may be the accusative of the object, and be either a poetic form for שְׂרָה, or plural *c. suff.* 1. *pers.* (my fields). Chr. B. Mich., Schür., Ros., Maur., Neum. translate according to the latter view: Does the snow of Lebanon descending from the rock forsake my fields? *i.e.* does it ever cease, flowing down from the rock, to water my fields, the fields of my people? To this view, however, it is to be opposed, *a.* that "from the rock" thus appears superfluous, at least not in its proper place,

since, according to the sense given, it would belong to "snow of Lebanon;" *b.* that the figure contains no real illustrative truth. The watering of the fields of God's people, *i.e.* of Palestine or Judah, by the snow of Lebanon could be brought about only by the water from the melting snow of Lebanon soaking into the ground, and so feeding the springs of the country. But this view of the supply for the springs that watered the land cannot be supposed to be a fact of natural history so well known that the prophet could found an argument on it. Most recent commentators therefore join *מַצּוֹר שָׂרִי*, and translate: does the snow of Lebanon cease from the rock of the field (does it disappear)? The use of *עֹב* with *מן* is unexampled, but is analogous to *עֹב הַסֶּדֶק מֵעַם*, Gen. xxiv. 27, where, however, *עֹב* is used transitively. But even when translated as above, "rock of the field" is variously understood. Hitz. will have it to be Mount Zion, which in xvii. 3 is called my mountain in the field, and xxi. 13, rock of the plain; and says the trickling waters are the waters of Gihon, these being the only never-drying water of Jerusalem, the origin of which has never been known, and may have been commonly held to be from the snow of Lebanon. Graf and Näg., again, have justly objected that the connection between the snow of Lebanon and the water-springs of Zion is of too doubtful a kind, and does not become probable by appeal to Ps. cxxxiii. 3, where the dew of Hermon is said to descend on the mountains of Zion. For it is perfectly possible that a heavy dew after warm days might be carried to Jerusalem by means of the cool current of air coming down from the north over Hermon (cf. Del. on Ps. cxxxiii. 3); but not that the water of the springs of Jerusalem should have come from Lebanon. Like Ew., Umbr., Graf., and Näg., we therefore understand the rock of the field to be Lebanon itself. But it is not so called as being a detached, commanding rocky mountain, for this is not involved in the sig. of *שָׂרִי* (see on xvii. 3); nor as bulwark of the field (Näg.), for *צוֹר* does not mean bulwark, and the change of *מַצּוֹר* into *מַצּוֹר*, from *מַצּוֹר*, a hemming in, siege, would give a most unsuitable figure. We hold the "field" to be the land of Israel, whence seen, the summit of Lebanon, and especially the peak of Hermon covered with eternal snows, might very well be called the rock

of the field.¹ Observe the omission of the article before Lebanon, whereby it comes about that the name is joined appellatively to "snow:" the Lebanon-snow. And accordingly we regard the waters as those which trickle down from Hermon. The wealth of springs in Lebanon is well known, and the trickling water of Lebanon is used as an illustration in Cant. iv. 15. יִנָּשׂוּ, are rooted up, strikes us as singular, since "root up" seems suitable neither for the drying up of springs, nor for: to be checked in their course. Dav. Kimchi thought, therefore, it stood for יִנָּשׂוּ, *omittuntur*; but this word has not this signification. Probably a transposition has taken place, so that we have יִנָּשׂוּ for יִנָּשׂוּ, since for נָשׂוּ in Niph. the sig. dry up is certified by Isa. xix. 5. The predicate, too, נָשׂוּ is singular. Strange waters are in 2 Kings xix. 24 waters belonging to others; but this will not do here. So Ew. derives נָשׂוּ from נָשׂוּ, press, urge, and correspondingly, נָשׂוּ from נָשׂוּ, spring, well up: waters pouring forth with fierce pressure. In this case, however, the following נָשׂוּ would be superfluous, or at least feeble. Then, נָשׂוּ, Prov. xxv. 25, is cold water; and besides, נָשׂוּ means *constrinxit, compressit*, of which root-meaning the sig. to press forth is a contradiction. There is therefore nothing for it but to keep to the sig. strange for נָשׂוּ; strange waters = waters coming from afar, whose springs are not known, so that they could be stopped up. The predicate cold is quite in keeping, for cold waters do not readily dry up, the coldness

¹ "Hermon is not a conical mountain like Tabor, with a single lofty peak and a well-defined base, but a whole mountain mass of many days' journey in circuit, with a broad crest of summits. The highest of these lie within the Holy Land, and, according to the measurements of the English engineers, Majors Scott and Robe (1840), rise to a height of 9376 English feet,—summits encompassed by far-stretching mountain ridges, from whose deep gloomy valleys the chief rivers of the country take their rise. . . . Behind the dark green foremost range (that having valleys clothed with pine and oak forests) high mountains raise their domes aloft; there is a fir wood sprinkled with snow as with silver, a marvellous mingling of bright and dark; and behind these rises the broad central ridge with its peaks covered with deep and all but everlasting snows."—Van de Velde, *Reise*, i. S. 96 f. Therewith cf. Robins. *Phys. Geogr.* p. 315: "In the ravines round about the highest of the two peaks, snow, or rather ice, lies the whole year round. In summer this gives the mountain, when seen from a distance, the appearance of being surrounded with radiant stripes descending from its crown."

being a protection against evaporation. Such, then, will be the meaning of the verse: As the Lebanon-snow does not forsake the rock, so the waters trickling thence do not dry up. From the application of this general idea, that in inanimate nature faithfulness and constancy are found, to Israel's bearing towards God arises a deeper significance, which shows why this figure was chosen. The rock in the field points to the Rock of Israel as the everlasting rock, rock of ages (Isa. xxx. 29 and xxvi. 4), and the cold, *i.e.* refreshing waters, which trickle from the rock of the field, point to Jabeli, the fountain of living water, ii. 13 and xvii. 13. Although the snow does not forsake Lebanon, Israel has forgotten the fountain of living water from which water of life flows to it; cf. ii. 13.

The application at ver. 15 is introduced by a causal *כִּי*. Ew. wrongly translates: that my people forgot me. *כִּי* means for; and the causal import is founded on the main idea of ver. 13: A very horrible thing hath Israel done; for it hath done that which is unheard of in the natural world, it hath forsaken me, the rock of safety; cf. ii. 32. They burn odours, *i.e.* kindle sacrifices, to the vanity, *i.e.* the null gods, cf. Ps. xxxi. 7, *i.e.* to Baal, vii. 9, xi. 13, 17. The subject to *יִשְׁלֹם* may be most simply supplied from the idea of "the vanity:" the null gods made them to stumble; cf. for this idea 2 Chron. xxviii. 23. This seems more natural than to leave the subject indefinite, in which case the false prophets (cf. xxiii. 27) or the priests, or other seducers, would be the moving spirits. "The ancient paths" is apposition to "their ways:" upon their ways, the paths of the old time, *i.e.* not, however, the good old believing times, from whose ways the Israelites have but recently diverged. For *עוֹלָם* never denotes the time not very long passed away, but always old, immemorial time, here specially the time of the patriarchs, who walked on the right paths of faithfulness to God, as in vi. 16. Hitz. and Graf have taken "the ancient paths" as subject: the old paths have made the Israelites to stumble on their ways, which gives a most unnatural idea, while the "paths of the earliest time" is weakened into "the example of their ancestors;" and besides, the parallelism is destroyed. As "by-paths" is defined by the apposition "a way not cast up," so is "on their ways" by "the ancient paths." The *Chet.*

שְׁבוּלִי is found only here; the *Keri* is formed after Ps. lxxvii. 20. A way not cast up is one on which one cannot advance, reach the goal, or on which one suffers hurt and perishes.—In ver. 16 the consequences of these doings are spoken of as having been wrought out by themselves, in order thus to bring out the God-ordained causal nexus between actions and their consequences. To make their land an object of horror to all that set foot on it. שְׁרוּקוֹת occurs only here, while the *Keri* שְׁרוּקוֹת is found only in Judg. v. 16 for the piping of shepherds, from שָׁרַק, to hiss, to pipe. In connection with שִׁמְהָ as expression of horror or amazement, Jeremiah elsewhere uses only שְׁרָקָה, cf. xix. 8, xxv. 9, 18, xxix. 18, li. 37, so that here the vowelling should perhaps be שְׁרוּקָה. The word does not here denote the hissing = hissing down or against one, by way of contempt, but the sound midway between hissing and whistling which escapes one when one looks on something appalling. On “every one that passeth by shall be dismayed,” cf. 1 Kings ix. 8. הִינֵנִי בְּרֹאשׁוֹ only here = הִינֵנִי רֹאשׁ, to move the head to and fro, shake the head; a gesture of malicious amazement, cf. Ps. xxii. 8, cix. 25, like מְנוּד רֹאשׁ, Ps. xlv. 15.—In ver. 17 the Lord discloses the coming punishment. Like an east wind, *i.e.* a violent storm-wind (cf. Ps. xlviii. 8), will I scatter them, cf. xiii. 24. Because they have turned to Him the back and not the face (cf. ii. 27), so will He turn His back on them in the day of their ruin, cf. Ezek. xxxv. 5.

Vers. 18-23. *Enmity displayed against the prophet by the people for this discourse, and prayer for protection from his enemies.*—Ver. 18. “Then said they: Come and let us plot schemes against Jeremiah; for law shall not be lost to the priest, and counsel to the wise, and speech to the prophet. Come and let us smite him with the tongue and not give heed to all his speeches. Ver. 19. Give heed to me, Jahveh, and hearken to the voice of them that contend with me! Ver. 20. Shall evil be repaid for good, that they dig a pit for my soul? Remember how I stood before Thee to speak good for them, to turn away Thy wrath from them! Ver. 21. Therefore give their sons to the famine and deliver them to the sword, that their wives become childless and widows, and their men slaughtered by death, their young men smitten by the sword in

battle. Ver. 22. Let a cry be heard from their houses, when Thou bringest troops upon them suddenly; for they have digged a pit to take me and laid snares for my feet. Ver. 23. But Thou Jahveh knowest all their counsels against me for death: forgive not their iniquity and blot not out their sin from before Thy face, that they be overthrown before Thee; in the time of Thine anger deal with them."

Even the solemn words (vers. 15-17) of the prophet were in vain. Instead of examining themselves and reforming their lives, the blinded sinners resolve to put the troublesome preacher of repentance out of the way by means of false charges. The subject of "and they said" is those who had heard the above discourse; not all, of course, but the infatuated leaders of the people who had. They call on the multitude to plot schemes against him, cf. xi. 18 ff. For they have, as they think, priests, wise men, and prophets to give them instruction out of the law, counsel, and word, *i.e.* prophecy,—namely, according to their idea, such as advise, teach, and preach otherwise than Jeremiah, who speaks only of repentance and judgment. Recent scholars render תּוֹרָה doctrine, which is right etymologically, but not so when judged by the constant usage, which regards the Torah, the law, as containing the substance of all the doctrine needed by man to tell him how to bear himself towards God, or to make his life happy. The Mosaic law is the foundation of all prophetic preaching; and that the speakers mean תּוֹרָה in this sense is clear from their claiming the knowledge of the Torah as belonging to the priests; the law was committed to the keeping and administration of the priests. The "counsel" is that needed for the conduct of the state in difficult circumstances, and in Ezek. vii. 26 it is attributed to the elders; and "speech" or word is the declarations of the prophets. On that subject, cf. viii. 8-10. To smite with the tongue is to ruin by slanders and malicious charges, cf. ix. 2, 4, 7, where the tongue is compared to a lying bow and deadly arrow, Ps. lxxiv. 4 f., lix. 8, etc. That they had the prophet's death in view appears from ver. 23; although their further speech: We will not give heed to his words, shows that in the discourse against which they were so enraged, he had said "nothing that, according to their ideas, was directly and immediately punishable with death"

(Hitz.); cf. xxvi. 6, 11. Against these schemes Jeremiah cries to God in ver. 19 for help and protection. While his adversaries are saying: People should give no heed to his speeches, he prays the Lord to give heed to him and to listen to the sayings of his enemies. "My contenders," who contend against me, cf. xxxv. 1, Isa. xlix. 25.—In support of his prayer he says in ver. 20: Shall evil be repaid for good? cf. Ps. xxxv. 12. In his discourses he had in view nothing but the good of the people, and he appeals to the prayers he had presented to the Lord to turn away God's anger from the people, cf. xiv. 7 ff., vers. 19-22. (On "my standing before Thee," cf. xv. 1.) This good they seek to repay with ill, by lying charges to dig a pit for his soul, *i.e.* for his life, into which pit he may fall; cf. Ps. lvii. 7, where, however, instead of שִׁנְתָהּ (ii. 6; Prov. xxii. 14, xxiii. 27), we have שִׁיחָה, as in ver. 22, *Chet*.—He prays the Lord to requite them for this wickedness by bringing on the people that which Jeremiah had sought to avert, by destroying them with famine, sword, and disease. The various kinds of death are, ver. 21, distributed rhetorically amongst the different classes of the people. The sons, *i.e.* children, are to be given up to the famine, the men to the sword, the young men to the sword in war. The suffix on הַנָּחִים refers to the people, of which the children are mentioned before, the men and women after. On הָיָרָהּ, cf. Ezek. xxxv. 5, Ps. lxxiii. 11. "Death," mentioned alongside of sword and famine, is death by disease and pestilence, as in xv. 2.—Ver. 22. To the terrors of the war and the siege is to be added the cry rising from all the houses into which hostile troops have burst, plundering and massacring. To lay snares, as in Ps. cxi. 6, cxlii. 4. פֶּתַח is the springe of the bird-catcher.—Ver. 23. Comprehensive summing up of the whole prayer. As the Lord knows their design against him for his death, he prays Him not to forgive their sin, but to punish it. The form תִּמְחֵי instead of תִּמַּח (Neh. xiii. 14) is the Aramaic form for תִּמְחֵה, like תִּנְי, iii. 6; cf. Ew. § 224, c. The *Chet*. תִּהְיֶי is the regular continuation of the imperative: and let them be cast down before Thee. The *Keri* תִּהְיֶי would be: that they may be cast down before Thee. Hitz. wrongly expounds the *Chet*.: but let them be fallen before Thee (in Thine eyes), *i.e.* morally degraded sinners; for the question is not here one of

moral degradation, but of the punishment of sinners. In the time of Thine anger, *i.e.* when Thou lettest loose Thy wrath, causest Thy judgments to come down, deal with them, *i.e.* with their transgressions. On וְיִשְׁפֹּךְ, cf. Dan. xi. 7.

On this prayer of the prophet to God to exterminate his enemies Hitz. remarks: "The various curses which in his bitter indignation he directs against his enemies are at bottom but the expression of the thought: Now may all that befall them which I sought to avert from them." The *Hirschberg Bible* takes a deeper grasp of the matter: "It is no prayer of carnal vengeance against those that hated him, vers. 18, 23, Ps. ix. 18, lv. 16; but as God had commanded him to desist (xiv. 11, 12) from the prayers he had frequently made for them, ver. 20, and as they themselves could not endure these prayers, ver. 18, he leaves them to God's judgments which he had been already compelled to predict to them, xi. 22, xiv. 12, 16, without any longer resisting with his entreaties, Luke xiii. 9, 2 Tim. iv. 14." In this observation that clause only is wrong which says Jeremiah merely leaves the wicked to God's judgments, since he, on the other hand, gives them up thereto, prays God to carry out judgment on them with the utmost severity. In this respect the present passage resembles the so-called cursing psalms (Ps. xxxv. 4-10, cix. 6-20, lix. 14-16, lxix. 26-29, etc.); nor can we say with Calvin: *hanc vehementiam, quoniam dictata fuit a spiritu sancto, non posse damnari, sed non debere trahi in exemplum, quia hoc singulare fuit in propheta*. For the prophet's prayer is no inspired יְדַבֵּר יְהוָה, but the wish and utterance of his heart, for the fulfilment of which he cries to God; just as in the psalms cited. On these imprecations, cf. Del. on Ps. xxxv. and cix., and vol. i. p. 417 f.; as also the solid investigation of this point by Kurtz: *Zur Theologie der Ps. IV. die Fluch- und Rache-psalmen* in the Dorpat *Ztschr. f. Theol. u. Kirche*, vii. (1865), S. 359 ff. All these curses are not the outcome and effusions of personal vengeance against enemies, but flow from the pure spring of a zeal, not self-regarding at all, for the glory of God. The enemies are God's enemies, despisers of His salvation. Their hostility against David and against Jeremiah was rooted in their hostility against God and the kingdom of God. The advancement of the kingdom of God, the fulfilment of the divine

scheme of salvation, required the fall of the ungodly who seek the lives of God's servants. In this way we would seek to defend such words of cursing by appealing to the legal spirit of the Old Testament, and would not oppose them to the words of Christ, Luke ix. 55. For Christ tells us why He blamed the Elias-like zeal of His disciples in the words: "The Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." In keeping with this, the peculiar end of Christ's coming on earth, we find no curses from Him against His enemies and the enemies of the kingdom of God. But just as the word, "I am not come," etc. (Luke ix. 56), does not exclude the truth that the Father hath given all judgment to Him, so, as Kurtz very justly remarks, "from our hearing no word of cursing from the mouth of Christ during His life on earth we cannot infer the absolute inadmissibleness of all such; still less can we infer that Christ's apostles and disciples could not at all be justified in using any words of cursing." And the apostles have indeed uttered curses against obdurate enemies: so Peter against Simon the Magian, Acts viii. 20; Paul against the high priest Ananias, Acts xxiii. 3, against the Jewish false teachers, Gal. i. 9 and v. 12, and against Alexander the coppersmith, 2 Tim. iv. 14. But these cases do not annihilate the distinction between the Old and the New Testaments. Since grace and truth have been revealed in Christ, the Old Testament standpoint of retribution according to the rigour of the law cannot be for us the standard of our bearing even towards the enemies of Christ and His kingdom.

Chap. xix. 1-13. THE BROKEN PITCHER.—Ver. 1. "Thus said Jahveh: Go and buy a potter's vessel, and take of the elders of the people and of the elders of the priests, Ver. 2. And go forth into the valley of Benhinnom, which is before the gate Harsuth, and proclaim there the words which I shall speak unto thee, Ver. 3. And say: Hear the word of Jahveh, ye kings of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: Thus hath said Jahveh of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I bring evil upon this place, the which whosoever heareth his ears shall tingle. Ver. 4. Because they have forsaken me, and disowned this place, and burnt incense in it to other gods whom they knew not,

they, and their fathers, and the kings of Judah, and have filled this place with the blood of innocents, Ver. 5. And have built high places for Baal, to burn their sons in the fire as burnt-offerings to Baal, which I have neither commanded nor spoken, nor came it into my heart. Ver. 6. Therefore, behold, days come, saith Jahveh, that this place shall no longer be called Tophet and Valley of Benhinnom, but Valley of Slaughter. Ver. 7. And I make void the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem in this place, and cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies and by the hand of them that seek their lives, and give their carcases to be food for the fowls of the heaven and the beast of the earth, Ver. 8. And make this city a dismay and a scoffing; every one that passeth thereby shall be dismayed and hiss because of all her strokes; Ver. 9. And make them eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and each shall eat his neighbour's flesh in the siege and straitness wherewith their enemies and they that seek after their lives shall straiten them.—Ver. 10. And break the pitcher before the eyes of the men that go with thee, Ver. 11. And say to them: Thus hath Jahveh of hosts said: Even so will I break this people and this city as one breaketh this potter's vessel, that it cannot be made whole again; and in Tophet shall they bury them, because there is no room to bury. Ver. 12. Thus will I do unto this place, saith Jahveh, and its inhabitants, to make this city as Tophet. Ver. 13. And the houses of Jerusalem and the houses of the kings of Judah shall become, as the place Tophet, unclean, all the houses upon whose roofs they have burnt incense to the whole host of heaven and poured out drink-offerings to other gods."

The purpose for which Jeremiah was to buy the earthen jar is told in ver. 10, and the meaning of breaking it in the valley of Benhinnom is shown in vers. 11-13. בִּקְעָה, from בָּקַע, to pour out, is a jar with a narrow neck, so called from the sound heard when liquid is poured out of it, although the vessel was used for storing honey, 1 Kings xiv. 3. The appellation יוֹצֵר הָרֶשֶׁת, former of earthen vessels, i.e. potter, is given to denote the jar as one which, on being broken, would shiver into many fragments. Before "of the elders of the people" a verb seems to be wanting, for which cause many supply יִלְקָחֶהָ (according to

xli. 12, xliii. 10, etc.), rightly so far as sense is concerned ; but we are hardly entitled to assume a lacuna in the text. That assumption is opposed by the ׀ before כִּי־יָקָן ; for we cannot straightway presume that this ׀ was put in after the verb had dropped out of the text. In that case the whole word would have been restored. We have here rather, as Schnur. saw, a bold *constructio prægnaans*, the verb “buy” being also joined in zeugma with “of the elders:” buy a jar and (take) certain of the elders ; cf. similar, only less bold, zengmatic constr. in Job iv. 10, x. 12, Isa. lviii. 5. “Elders of the priests,” as in 2 Kings xix. 2, probably identical with the “princes (שָׂרִי) of the priests,” 2 Chron. xxxvi. 14, are doubtless virtually the same as the “heads (רִאשֵׁי) of the priests,” Neh. xii. 7, the priests highest in esteem, not merely for their age, but also in virtue of their rank ; just as the “elders of the people” were a permanent representation of the people, consisting of the heads of tribes, houses or septs, and families ; cf. 1 Kings viii. 1-3, and my *Bibl. Archäol.* ii. S. 218. Jeremiah was to take elders of the people and of the priesthood, because it was most readily to be expected of them that the word of God to be proclaimed would find a hearing amongst them. As to the valley of Benhinom, see on vii. 31. שַׁעַר הַחֲרָסִית, not Sun-gate (after חָרָס, Job ix. 7, Judg. viii. 13), but Pottery or Sherd-gate, from חָרָס = חֶרֶשׁ, in rabbin. חֲרָסִית, potter’s clay. The *Chet*. חֲרָסִית is the ancient form, not the modern (Hitz.), for the *Keri* is adapted to the rabbinical form. The clause, “which is before the *Harsuth*-gate,” is not meant to describe more particularly the locality, sufficiently well known in Jerusalem, but has reference to the act to be performed there. The name, gate of חֲרָסִית, which nowhere else occurs, points no doubt to the breaking to shivers of the jar. Hence we are rather to translate Sherd-gate than Pottery-gate, the name having probably arisen amongst the people from the broken fragments which lay about this gate. Comm. are not at one as to which of the known city gates is meant. Hitz. and Kimchi are wrong in thinking of a gate of the court of the temple—the southern one. The context demands one of the city gates, two of which led into the Benhinom valley: the Spring- or Fountain-gate at the south-east corner, and the Dung-gate on the south-west side of Zion ; see on Neh. iii.

13-15. One of these two must be meant, but which of them it cannot be decided. There Jeremiah is to cry aloud the words which follow, vers. 3-8, and which bear on the kings of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. "Kings" in the plural, as in xiii. 13, because the matter concerned not the reigning king only, but his successors too, who had been guilty of the sins to be punished. In vers. 3-5 the threatening is summarily set forth. Horrible evil will the Lord bring on this place, *i.e.* Jerusalem. The ears of every one that hears it will tingle, so utterly stunning will the news of it turn out to be; cf. 2 Kings xxi. 12 and 1 Sam. iii. 11, where we find וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁמָעוּ; cf. Ew. § 197, *a*. This they have brought on themselves by their dreadful sins. They have forsaken Jahveh, disowned this place; וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁמָעוּ, prop. find strange, Deut. xxxii. 27, then treat as strange, deny, Job xxi. 29. In substance: they have not treated Jerusalem as the city of the sanctuary of their God, but, as is mentioned after, they have burnt incense in it to other (strange) gods. The words: they and their fathers, and the kings of Judah, are not the subject to "knew not," as is "they and their," etc., in ix. 15, xvi. 13, but to the preceding verb of the principal clause. "And have filled the city with the blood of innocents." This Grot. and others understand by the blood of the children slain for Moloch; and for this, appeal is made to Ps. cvi. 37 f., where the pouring out of innocent blood is explained to be that of sons and daughters offered to idols. But this passage cannot be the standard for the present one, neither can the statement that here we have to deal with idolatry alone. This latter is *petitio principii*. If shedding the blood of innocents had been said of offerings to Moloch, then ver. 5 must be taken as epexegesis. But in opposition to this we have not only the parallelism of the clauses, but also and especially the circumstance, that not till ver. 5 is mention made of altars on which to offer children to Moloch. We therefore understand the filling of Jerusalem with the blood of innocents, according to vii. 6, cf. ii. 34 and xxii. 3, 17, of judicial murder or of bloody persecution of the godly; and on two grounds: 1. because alongside of idolatry we always find mentioned as the chief sin the perversion of justice to the shedding of innocent blood (cf. the passages cited), so that this sin would not likely be omitted here, as one cause

of the dreadful judgment about to pass on Jerusalem; 2. because our passage recalls the very wording of 2 Kings xxi. 16, where, after mentioning his idolatry, it is said of Manasseh: Also innocent blood hath he shed, until he made Jerusalem full (מל) to the brink. The climax in the enumeration of sins in these verses is accordingly this: 1. The disowning of the holiness of Jerusalem as the abode of the Lord by the public practice of idolatry; 2. the shedding of innocent blood as extremity of injustice and godless judicial practices; 3. as worst of all abominations, the building of altars for burning their own children to Moloch. That the Moloch-sacrifices are mentioned last, as being worst of all, is shown by the three relative clauses: which I have not commanded, etc., which by an impassioned gradation of phrases mark God's abomination of these horrors. On this subject cf. vii. 31 and xxxii. 35.

In vers. 6-13 the threatened punishment is given again at large, and that in two strophes or series of ideas, which explain the emblematical act with the pitcher. The first series, vers. 6-9, is introduced by יָקִיץ, which intimates the meaning of the pitcher; and the other, vers. 10-13, is bound up with the breaking of the pitcher. But both series are, ver. 6, opened by the mention of the locality of the act. As ver. 5 was but an expansion of vii. 31, so ver. 6 is a literal repetition of vii. 32. The valley of Benhinnom, with its places for abominable sacrifices (בְּנִינּוֹם, see on vii. 32), shall in the future be called Valley of Slaughter; i.e. at the judgment on Jerusalem it will be the place where the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judah will be slain by the enemy. There God will make void (בִּקְוִי, playing on בִּקְוִיָּה), i.e. bring to nothing; for what is poured out comes to nothing; cf. Isa. xix. 3. There they shall fall by the sword in such numbers that their corpses shall be food for the beasts of prey (cf. vii. 33), and the city of Jerusalem shall be frightfully ravaged (ver. 8, cf. xviii. 16, xxv. 9, etc.). מַכּוֹתָהּ (plural form of suffix without *Jod*; cf. Ew. § 258, a), the wounds she has received.—In ver. 9 is added yet another item to complete the awful picture, the terrible famine during the siege, partly taken from the words of Deut. xxviii. 53 ff. and Lev. xxvi. 29. That this appalling misery did actually come about during the last siege by the Chaldeans, we learn from Lam. iv. 10.—The

second series, vers. 10–13, is introduced by the act of breaking the pitcher. This happens before the eyes of the elders who have accompanied Jeremiah thither: to them the explanatory word of the Lord is addressed. As the earthen pitcher, so shall Jerusalem—people and city—be broken to pieces; and that irremediably. This is implied in: as one breaks a potter's vessel, etc. (הִרְפָּה for הִרְפָּא). The next clause: and in Tophet they shall bury, etc., is omitted by the LXX. as a repetition from vii. 32, and is objected to by Ew., Hitz., and Graf, as not being in keeping with its context. Ew. proposes to insert it before “as one breaketh;” but this transposition only obscures the meaning of the clause. It connects very suitably with the idea of the incurable breaking in sunder. Because the breaking up of Jerusalem and its inhabitants shall be incurable, shall be like the breaking of a pitcher dashed into countless fragments, therefore there will be lack of room in Jerusalem to bury the dead, and the unclean places of Tophet will need to be used for that purpose. With this the further thought of vers. 12 and 13 connects simply and suitably. Thus (as had been said at ver. 11) will I do unto this place and its inhabitants, וְלָחֶה, and that to make the city as Tophet, *i.e.* not “a mass of sherds and rubbish, as Tophet now is” (Graf); for neither was Tophet then a rubbish-heap, nor did it so become by the breaking of the pitcher. But Josiah had turned all the place of Tophet in the valley of Benhinom into an unclean region (2 Kings xxiii. 10). All Jerusalem shall become an unclean place like Tophet. This is put in so many words in ver. 13: The houses of Jerusalem shall become unclean like the place Tophet, namely, all houses on whose roofs idolatry has been practised. The construction of הַבְּתֵּימִים causes some difficulty. The position of the word at the end disfavors our connecting it with the subject בְּתֵי, and so does the article, which does not countenance its being taken as predicate. To get rid of the article, J. D. Mich. and Ew. sought to change the reading into תַּפְתָּה בְּתֵימִים, after Isa. xxx. 33. But תַּפְתָּה means a Tophet-like place, not Tophet itself, and so gives no meaning to the purpose. No other course is open than to join the word with “the place Tophet:” like the place Tophet, which is unclean. The plural would then be explained less from the collective force of מְקוֹם than from regard

to the plural subject. "All the houses" opens a supplementary definition of the subject: as concerning all houses; cf. Ew. § 310, *a*. On the worship of the stars by sacrifice on the house-tops, transplanted by Manasseh to Jerusalem, see the expos. of Zeph. i. 5 and 2 Kings xxi. 3. 'וְהַבָּתִּים, coinciding literally with vii. 18; the *inf. absol.* being attached to the *verb. finit.* of the former clause (Ew. § 351, *c*.).—Thus far the word of the Lord to Jeremiah, which he was to proclaim in the valley of Benhinom.—The execution of the divine commission is, as being a matter of course, not expressly recounted, but is implied in ver. 14 as having taken place.

Chap. xix. 14-xx. 6. THE PROPHET JEREMIAH AND THE TEMPLE-WARDEN PASHUR.—Ver. 14 f. When Jeremiah, having performed the divine command, returned from Tophet to the city, he went into the court of the house of God and spoke to the people assembled there, ver. 15: "Thus hath said Jahveh of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I bring upon this city, and all its cities, all the evil that I have pronounced against it, because they stiffened their necks not to hear my words." "All the people" is the people present in the court of the temple as distinguished from the men who had accompanied Jeremiah into the valley of Benhinom (ver. 10). 'אָנֹכִי, the *א* having dropped off, as in xxxix. 16, 1 Kings xxi. 21, 29, 2 Sam. v. 2, and often. "All its cities" are the towns that belonged to Jerusalem, were subject to it (xxxiv. 1); in other words, the cities of Judah, i. 15, ix. 10, etc. All the evil that I have pronounced against it, not merely in the valley of Benhinom (vers. 3-13), but generally up till this time, by the mouth of Jeremiah. If we limit the reference of this view to the prophecy in Tophet, we must assume, with Näg., that Jeremiah repeated the substance of it here; and besides, that prophecy is not in keeping with "all its cities," inasmuch as it (vers. 3-13) deals with Jerusalem alone. Apparently Jeremiah must have said more than is written in the verse, and described the evil somewhat more closely; so that the new matter spoken by him here consists in the "Behold I bring," etc., *i.e.* in his forewarning them of the speedy fulfilment of the threatenings against Jerusalem and Judah, as was the case with the pro-

phesy in the valley of Behinnom, which also, ver. 3, begins with הִנְנִי מִבְּרִיא. On "they stiffened their necks," etc., cf. xvii. 23, vii. 26.

Chap. xx. 1 and 2. When the chief overseer of the temple, Pashur, heard this prophecy, he had the prophet beaten, and put him over-night in the stocks at the upper gate of Benjamin in the temple. *Pashur* is by the appellation: son of *Immer*, distinguished from other priests of this name, e.g. Pashur, son of Malchijah, 1 Chron. ix. 12. It cannot be determined whether *Immer* is here the name of the 16th class of priests (1 Chron. xxiv. 14) or of one of the greater priestly clans (Ezra ii. 37; Neh. vii. 40). Pashur held the office of פָּקִיד נָגִיד, chief overseer in the house of God. נָגִיד is an official name attached to פָּקִיד to explain it. In the latter word lies the idea of overseeing, while the former denotes the official standing or rank of the overseer. The position of נָגִיד was a high one, as may be seen from the fact that the priest Zephaniah, who, according to xxix. 26, held this post, is quoted in lii. 24 (2 Kings xxv. 18) as next to the high priest. The compound expression without article implies that there were several נָגִידִים of the temple. In 2 Chron. xxxv. 8 there are three mentioned under Josiah; which is not contradicted by 2 Chron. xxxi. 13, 1 Chron. ix. 11, Neh. xi. 11, where particular persons are called נָגִיד בֵּית ה'. As chief overseer of the temple, Pashur conceived it to be his duty to take summary magisterial steps against Jeremiah, for his public appearance in the temple. To put this procedure of the priest and temple-warden in its proper light, Jeremiah is designated by the name of his office, הִנְנִי.¹ In virtue of the summary authority which belonged to him (cf. xxix. 26), Pashur smote the prophet, i.e. caused him to be beaten with stripes, perhaps according to the precept Deut. xxv. 3, cf. 2 Cor. xi. 24, and

¹ As this official designation of Jeremiah is not found in chap. i.-xix., but occurs frequently in the succeeding chapters, recent critics have taken it to be an idle addition of the editor of the later prophecies, and have laid stress on the fact as a proof of the later composition, or at least later editing, of these pieces; cf. Graf, S. xxxix, Näg., etc. This assumption is totally erroneous. The designation of Jeremiah as הִנְנִי occurs only where the mention of the man's official character was of importance. It is used partly in contradistinction to the false prophets, xxviii. 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 15, to

then threw him into prison till the following day, and put him in the stocks. **מִהֶפְכֶּת**, twisting, was an instrument of torture by which the body was forced into a distorted, unnatural posture; the culprit's hands and feet were presumably bound, so as to keep the position so; see on 2 Chron. xvi. 10, cf. with Acts xvi. 24. The upper gate of Benjamin in the house of Jahveh is the northern gate at the upper, *i.e.* inner court of the temple, the same with the upper gate or the gate of the inner court, looking northwards, Ezek. ix. 2 and viii. 3. By the designation "which is in the house," etc., it is distinguished from the city gate of like name, xxxvii. 13, xxxviii. 7.—When on the next day Pashur released the prophet from imprisonment, the latter made known to him the divine punishment for his misdeed: "Not Pashur will Jahveh call thy name, but Magor-Missabib" (*i.e.* Fear round about). The name is expressive of the thing. And so: Jahveh will call the name, is, in other words, He will make the person to be that which the name expresses; in this case, make Pashur to be an object of fear round about. Under the presumption that the name *Magor-Missabib* conveyed a meaning the most directly opposed to that of *Pashur*, comm. have in various ways attempted to interpret **מִגּוֹר־מִסַּבִּיב**. It is supposed to be composed of **פָּאֵשׁ**, Chald. *augeri*, and **חֹר**, *nobilitas*, with the force: *abundantia claritatis* (Rashi); or after **فَسَا**, *gloriatu est de nobilitate* (Simonis); or from **فَسَح**, *amplus fuit locus*, and the Chald. **סְחֹר**, *circumcirca: de securitate circumcirca*; or finally, by Ew., from **פָּשׁ** from **פָּאֵשׁ**, spring, leap, rejoice (Mal. iii. 20), and **חֹר** = **חֹל**, joy round about. All these interpretations are arbitrary. **פָּאֵשׁ** sig. leap and gallop about, Mal. iii. 20 and Hab. i. 8, and in Niph. Nah. iii. 18, to be scattered (see on Hab. i. 8); and **פָּשַׁח** sig. in Lam. iii. 11 to tear. But the syllable **חֹר** can

the elders, priests, and false prophets, xxix. 1, 29, xxxvii. 3, 6, 13, xlii. 2, 4, to the king, xxxii. 2, xxxiv. 6, xxxvii. 2, and partly to distinguish from persons of other conditions in life, xliii. 6, xlv. 1, li. 59. We never find the title in the headings of the prophecies save in xxv. 2, with reference to the fact that here, ver. 4, he upbraids the people for not regarding the sayings of all the prophets of the Lord; and in the oracles against foreign peoples, xlvi. 1, 13, xlvii. 1, xlix. 34, and l. 1, where the name of his calling gave him credentials for these prophecies.—There is no further use of the name in the entire book.

by no means have the sig. of **מִפְּנֵי** claimed for it. Nor are there, indeed, sufficient grounds for assuming that Jeremiah turned the original name upside down in an etymological or philological reference. The new name given by Jeremiah to Pashur is meant to intimate the man's destiny. On "Fear round about," see on vi. 25. What the words of the new name signify is explained in vers. 4-6. Ver. 4. "For thus hath Jahveh said: Behold, I make thee a terror to thyself and to all thy friends, and they shall fall by the sword of their enemies and thine eyes behold it; and all Judah will I give into the hand of the king of Babylon, that he may carry them captive to Babylon and smite them with the sword. Ver. 5. And I will give all the stores of this city, and all its gains, and all its splendour, and all the treasures of the kings of Judah will I give into the hand of their enemies, who shall plunder them and take and bring them to Babylon. Ver. 6. And thou, Pashur, and all that dwell in thine house shall go into captivity, and to Babylon shalt thou come, and there die, and there be buried, thou and all thy friends, to whom thou hast prophesied lyingly."—Pashur will become a fear or terror to himself and all his friends, because of his own and his friends' fate; for he will see his friends fall by the sword of the enemy, and then he himself, with those of his house and his friends not as yet slain, will go forth into exile to Babylon and die there. So that not to himself merely, but to all about him, he will be an object of fear. Næg. wrongly translates **לְמִנְיָהּ**, I deliver thee up to fear, and brings into the text the contrast that Pashur is not to become the victim of death itself, but of perpetual fear of death. Along with Pashur's friends, all Judah is to be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and be partly exiled to Babylon, partly put to death with the sword. All the goods and gear of Jerusalem, together with the king's treasures, are to be plundered and carried off by the enemy. We must not press "all thy friends" in vers. 4 and 6; and so we escape the apparent contradiction, that while in ver. 4 it is said of all the friends that they shall die by the sword, it is said of all in ver. 6 that they shall go into exile. The friends are those who take Pashur's side, his partisans. From the last clause of ver. 6 we see that Pashur was also of the number of the false prophets, who

prophesied the reverse of Jeremiah's prediction, namely, welfare and peace (cf. xxiii. 17, xiv. 13).—This saying of Jeremiah was most probably fulfilled at the taking of Jerusalem under Jechoniah, Pashur and the better part of the people being carried off to Babylon.

Vers. 7-18. THE PROPHET'S COMPLAINTS AS TO THE SUFFERINGS MET WITH IN HIS CALLING.—This portion contains, first, a complaint addressed to the Lord regarding the persecutions which the preaching of God's word draws down on Jeremiah, but the complaint passes into a jubilant cry of hope (vers. 7-13); secondly, a cursing of the day of his birth (vers. 13-18). The first complaint runs thus:

Vers. 7-13. "Thou hast persuaded me, Jahveh, and I let myself be persuaded; Thou hast laid hold on me and hast prevailed. I am become a laughter the whole day long, every one mocketh at me. Ver. 8. For as often as I speak, I must call out and cry violence and spoil, for the word of Jahveh is made a reproach and a derision to me all the day. Ver. 9. And I said, I will no more remember nor speak more in His name; then was it in my heart as burning fire, shut up in my bones, and I become weary of holding out, and cannot. Ver. 10. For I heard the talk of many: Fear round about! Report, and let us report him! Every man of my friendship lies in wait for my downfall: Peradventure he will let himself be enticed, that we may prevail against him and take our revenge on him. Ver. 11. But Jahveh stands by me as a mighty warrior; therefore shall my persecutors stumble and not prevail, shall be greatly put to shame, because they have not dealt wisely, with everlasting disgrace which will not be forgotten. Ver. 12. And, Jahveh of hosts that trieth the righteous, that seeth reins and heart, let me see Thy vengeance on them, for to Thee have I committed my cause. Ver. 13. Sing to Jahveh, praise Jahveh, for He saves the soul of the poor from the hand of the evil-doers."

This lament as to the hatred and persecution brought upon him by the preaching of the word of the Lord, is chiefly called forth by the proceedings, recounted in vers. 1, 2, of the temple-warden Pashur against him. This is clear from the מִן־הַמִּסְבֵּי; for, as Näg. truly remarks, the use of this expression

against the prophet may certainly be most easily explained by the use he had so pregnantly made of it against one so distinguished as Pashur. Besides, the bitterness of the complaint, rising at last to the extent of cursing the day of his birth (ver. 14 ff.), is only intelligible as a consequence of such ill-usage as Pashur had already inflicted on him. For although his enemies had schemed against his life, they had never yet ventured positively to lay hands on his person. Pashur first caused him to be beaten, and then had him kept a whole night long in the torture of the stocks. From torture like this his enemies might proceed even to taking his life, if the Lord did not miraculously shield him from their vengeance.—The complaint, vers. 7–13, is an outpouring of the heart to God, a prayer that begins with complaint, passes into confidence in the Lord's protection, and ends in a triumph of hope. In vers. 7 and 8 Jeremiah complains of the evil consequences of his labours. God has persuaded him to undertake the office of prophet, so that he has yielded to the call of God. The words of ver. 7a are not an upbraiding, nor are they given in an upbraiding tone (Hitz.); for פתה does not mean befool, but persuade, induce by words to do a thing. קץ used transitively, but not as 1 Kings xvi. 22, overpower (Ros., Graf, etc.); for then it would not be in keeping with the following ותקבל, which after "overpower" would seem very feeble. It means: lay hold of; as usually in the Hiph., so here in Kal. It thus corresponds to תקלת, Isa. viii. 11, denoting the state of being laid hold of by the power of the Spirit of God in order to prophesy. ותקבל, not: Thou hast been able, but: Thou hast prevailed, conquered. A sharp contrast to this is presented by the issue of his prophetic labours: I am become a laughing-stock all the day, i.e. incessantly. כלם, its (the people's) entirety = all the people.—In ver. 8 "call" is explained by "cry out violence and spoil:" complain of the violence and spoliation that are practised. The word of Jahveh is become a reproach and obloquy, i.e. the proclamation of it has brought him only contempt and obloquy. The two cases of כי are co-ordinate; the two clauses give two reasons for everybody mocking at him. One is objective: so often as he speaks he can do nothing but complain of violence, so that he is ridiculed by the mass of the people; and one is subjective: his preaching brings him only

disgrace. Most comm. refer "violence and spoiling" to the ill-usage the prophet experiences; but this does not exhaust the reference of the words.—Ver. 9. After such bitter experiences, the thought arose in his soul: I will remember Him (Jahveh) no more, *i.e.* make no more mention of the Lord, nor speak in His name, labour as a prophet; but it was within him as burning fire. The subject is not expressed, but is, as Ros. and Hitz. rightly say, the word of Jahveh which is held back. "Shut up in my bones" is apposition to "burning fire," for שָׁם occurs elsewhere also as *masc.*, *e.g.* xlviii. 45, Job xx. 26, Ps. civ. 4. The word of God dwells in the heart; but from there outwards it acts upon his whole organism, like a fire shut up in the hollow of his bones, burning the marrow of them (Job xxi. 24), so that he can no longer bear to keep silence. The perfects "and I said," "and (then) it was," "and I became weary," are to be taken as preterites, expressing events that have several times been repeated, and so the final result is spoken in the *imperf.* I cannot.—Ver. 10 gives the reason for the resolution, adopted but not carried out, of speaking no more in the name of the Lord. This was found in the reports that reached his ears of schemes against his life. The first clause is a verbal quotation from Ps. xxxi. 14, a lament of David in the time of Saul's persecutions. דָּבָר, base, backbiting slander. The phrase: Fear round about, indicates, in the form of a brief popular saying, the dangerous case in which the prophet was,¹ which his adversaries prepare for him by their repeating: Report him, we will report him. Report: here, report to the authorities as a dangerous man. Even those who are on friendly terms with him lie in wait for his fall. This phrase too is formed of phrases from the Psalms. On "man of my peace," cf. Ps. xli. 10; on אֶלַי, Ps. xxxv. 15, xxxviii. 18; and on שָׁמַר, watch, lie in wait for, Ps. lvi. 7, lxxi. 10. "Peradventure"—so they said—"he may

¹ Hupfeld on Ps. xxxi. 14 holds מְנוּרָה מִפְּנֵי to be a proverbial expression for a harassed condition, full of terrors, since the phrase is frequently used by Jeremiah (besides the present vers. 3, 4, and 15, it is at vi. 25, xlv. 5, xlix. 29, Lam. ii. 22). The use made of it in ver. 3 would in that case be easily understood. For we cannot infer, as Nög. would do, that Jeremiah must have formed the phrase himself, from the fact that, except in Ps. xxxi. 14, it is nowhere found but in Jeremiah.

let himself be enticed," *sc.* to say something on which a capital charge may be founded (Graf). With "that we may prevail against him," cf. i. 19, xv. 20.—At ver. 11 the lament rises into confidence in the Lord, springing from the promise given to him by God at his call. *אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה* (for *אֱלֹהֵי*) recalls i. 19, xv. 20. The designation of God as *גִּבּוֹר עֲרִיץ* is formed after xv. 21. Because the Lord has promised to deliver him out of the hand of the *עֲרִיצִים*, violent, he now calls him a hero using violence, and on this founds his assurance that his persecutors will accomplish nothing, but will come to a downfall, to shame, and be covered with never-dying, never-to-be-forgotten disgrace. Because they have dealt not wisely, *i.e.* foolishly, see on x. 21; not: because they did not prosper, which would give a weak, superfluous idea, since their not prospering lies already in *בָּשָׁם*, *spe frustrari*. This disgrace will befall the persecutors, because the Lord of hosts will, as Searcher of hearts, take the part of the righteous, and will take vengeance on their foes. This is the force of ver. 12, which, with a few changes, is repeated from xi. 20.—In this trustfulness his soul rises to a firm hope of deliverance, so that in ver. 13 he can call on himself and all the godly to praise God, the Saviour of the poor. Cf. Ps. xxxi. 8, xxxv. 9, 10, 28, etc.

Vers. 14–18. *The day of his birth cursed.*—Ver. 14. "Cursed be the day wherein I was born! The day my mother bare me, let it not be blessed! Ver. 15. Cursed be the man that brought the good tidings to my father, saying: A man-child is born to thee, who made him very glad. Ver. 16. Let that man be as the cities which Jahveh overthrew without repenting; let him hear crying in the morning and a war-cry at noon-tide, Ver. 17. Because he slew me not from the womb, and so my mother should have been my grave, and her womb should have been always great. Ver. 18. Wherefore am I come forth out of the womb to see hardship and sorrow, and that my days should wear away in shame?"

Inasmuch as the foregoing lamentation had ended in assured hope of deliverance, and in the praise rendered to God therefor, it seems surprising that now there should follow curses on the day of his birth, without any hint to show that at the end this temptation, too, had been overcome. For this reason Ew. wishes

to rearrange the two parts of the complaint, setting vers. 14-18 before vers. 7-12. This transposition he holds to be so unquestionably certain, that he speaks of the order and numbering of the verses in the text as an example, clear as it is remarkable, of displacement. But against this hypothesis we have to consider the improbability that, if individual copyists had omitted the second portion (vers. 14-18) or written it on the margin, others should have introduced it into an unsuitable place. Copyists did not go to work with the biblical text in such an arbitrary and clumsy fashion. Nor is the position occupied by the piece in question so incomprehensible as Ew. imagines. The cursing of the day of his birth, or of his life, after the preceding exaltation to hopeful assurance is not psychologically inconceivable. It may well be understood, if we but think of the two parts of the lamentation as not following one another in the prophet's soul in such immediate succession as they do in the text; if we regard them as spiritual struggles, separated by an interval of time, through which the prophet must successively pass. In vanquishing the temptation that arose from the plots of his enemies against his life, Jeremiah had a strong support in the promise which the Lord gave him at his call, that those who strove against him should not prevail against him; and the deliverance out of the hand of Pashur which he had just experienced, must have given him an actual proof that the Lord was fulfilling His promise. The feeling of this might fill the trembling heart with strength to conquer his temptation, and to elevate himself again, in the joyful confidence of faith, to the praising of the Lord, who delivers the soul of the poor from the hand of the ungodly. But the power of the temptation was not finally vanquished by the renewal of his confidence that the Lord will defend him against all his foes. The unsuccess of his mission might stir up sore struggles in his soul, and not only rob him of all heart to continue his labours, but excite bitter discontent with a life full of hardship and sorrow,—a discontent which found vent in his cursing the day of his birth.

The curse uttered in vers. 14-18 against the day of his birth, while it reminds us of the verses, ch. iii. 3 ff., in which Job curses the day of his conception and of his birth, is markedly

distinguished in form and substance from that dreadful utterance of Job's. Job's words are much more violent and passionate, and are turned directly against God, who has given life to him, to a man whose way is hid, whom God hath hedged round. Jeremiah, on the other hand, curses first the day of his birth (ver. 14), then the man that brought his father the joyful news of the birth of a son (vers. 15-17), because his life is passing away in hardship, trials, sorrow, and shame, without expressly blaming God as the author of that life.—Ver. 14. The day on which I was born, let it be cursed and not blessed, *sc.* because life has never been a blessing to me. Job wishes that the day of his birth and the night of his conception may perish, be annihilated.—Ver. 15. In the curse on the man that brought the father the news of the birth, the stress lies on the clause, "who made him very glad," which goes to strengthen בִּשְׂרָר, εὐαγγελίζεσθαι, a clause which is subordinated to the principal clause without any grammatical connection (cf. Ew. § 341, *b*). The joy that man gave the father by his news is become to the son a source of bitter grief.—Ver. 16. He wishes the fate of Sodom (Gen. xix. 25), namely ruin, to befall that man. וְלֹא יִנָּחֵם, and may He (Jahveh) not let it repent Him, is adverbially used: without feeling compunction for the destruction, *i.e.* without pity. In ver. 16*b* destruction is depicted under the figure of the terrors of a town beleaguered by enemies and suddenly taken. וְנִקְוָה, the wailing cry of the afflicted townspeople; תִּירוּעָה, the war-cry of the enemies breaking in; cf. xv. 8.—Ver. 17 tells why the curse should fall on that man: because (וְשָׁמַר, causal) he slew me not from the womb, *i.e.* according to what follows: while yet in the womb, and so (וְהָיָה with ! *consec.*) my mother would have become my grave. Logically considered, the subject to מוֹתָהֲנִי can only be the man on whom the curse of ver. 15 is pronounced. But how could the man kill the child in the mother's womb? This consideration has given occasion to various untenable renderings. Some have taken "from the womb," according to Job iii. 11, in the sense: immediately after birth, *simul ac ex utero exiissem* (Ros.). This is grammatically fair enough, but it does not fall in with the context; for then the following *Vav consec.* must be taken as having the negative force "or rather," the negation being repeated in

the next clause again (Ros., Graf). Both these cases are grammatically inadmissible. Others would supply "Jahveh" as subject to מוֹתֵתִי, or take the verb as with indefinite subject, or as passive. But to supply "Jahveh" is quite arbitrary; and against the passive construction it must be said that thus the causal nexus, indicated by אֲשֶׁר, between the man on whom the curse is to fall and the slaying of the child is done away with, and all connection for the אֲשֶׁר with what precedes would be lost. The difficulty arising from simply accepting the literal meaning is solved by the consideration, that the curse is not levelled against any one particular person. The man that was present at the birth, so as to be able to bring the father the news of it, might have killed the child in the mother's womb. Jeremiah is as little thinking how this could happen as, in the next words, he is of the possibility of everlasting pregnancy. His words must be taken rhetorically, not physiologically. That pregnancy is everlasting that has no birth at the end of it.—In ver. 18 a reason for the curse is given, in that birth had brought him only a life of hardship and sorrow. To see hardship, *i.e.* experience, endure it. His days pass away, vanish in shame, *i.e.* shame at the discomfiture of hopes; for his life-calling produces no fruit, his prophetic work is in vain, since he cannot save his people from destruction.

The curse on the day of birth closes with a sigh at the wretchedness of life, without any hint that he again rises to new joyful faith, and without God's reprimanding him for his discontent as in xi. 19 f. This difficulty the comm. have not touched upon; they have considered only the questions: how at all such a curse in the mouth of a prophet is to be defended; and whether it is in its right place in this connection, immediately after the words so full of hope as ver. 11 ff. (cf. Näg.). The latter question we have already discussed at the beginning of the exposition of these verses. As to the first, opinions differ. Some take the curse to be a purely rhetorical form, having no object whatsoever. For, it is said, the long past day of his birth is as little an object on which the curse could really fall, as is the man who told his father of the birth of a son,—a man who in all probability never had a real existence (Näg.). To this view, ventured so early as Origen, Cor. a Lap. has justly

answered: *obstat, quod dies illa exstiterit fueritque creatura Dei; non licet autem maledicere alicui creaturæ Dei, sive illa præsens sit sive præterita.* Others, as Calv., espied in this cursing *quasi sacrilegum furorem*, and try to excuse it on the ground that the *principium hujus zeli* was justifiable, because Jeremiah cursed the day of his birth not because of personal sufferings, sicknesses, poverty, and the like, but *quoniam videret se perdere operam, quum tamen fideliter studeret eam impendere in salutem populi, deinde quum videret doctrinam Dei obnoxiam esse probris et vituperationibus, quum videret impios ita procaciter insurgere, quum videret totam pietatem ita haberi ludibrio.* But the sentence passed, that the prophet *gravissime peccaverit ut esset contumeliosus in Deum*, is a too severe one, as is also that of the *Berleburg Bible*, that “Jeremiah therein stands for an example of warning to all faithful witnesses for the truth, showing that they should not be impatient of the reproach, contempt, derision, and mockery that befall them on that account, if God’s long-suffering bears with the mockers so long, and ever delays His judgments.” For had Jeremiah sinned so grievously, God would certainly have reproached him with his wrong-doing, as in xv. 19. Since that is not here the case, we are not entitled to make out his words to be a beacon of warning to all witnesses for the truth. Certainly this imprecation was not written for our imitation; for it is doubtless an *infirmetas*, as Seb. Schm. called it,—an outbreak of the striving of the flesh against the spirit. But it should be to us a source of instruction and comfort. From it we should, on the one hand, learn the full weight of the temptation, so that we may arm ourselves with prayer in faith as a weapon against the power of the tempter; on the other hand, we should see the greatness of God’s grace, which raises again those that are stumbling to their fall, and does not let God’s true servants succumb under the temptation, as we gather from the fact, that the Lord does not cast off His servant, but gives him the needed strength for carrying on the heavy labours of his office.—The difficulty that there is no answer from the Lord to this complaint, neither by way of reprimand nor of consolation, as in xii. 5 f., xv. 10, 19 f., is solved when we consider that at his former complainings the Lord had said to him all that was needed to comfort him and raise him up again. A

repetition of those promises would have soothed his bitterness of spirit for a time, perhaps, but not permanently. For the latter purpose the Lord was silent, and left him time to conquer from within the temptation that was crushing him down, by recalling calmly the help from God he had so often hitherto experienced in his labours, especially as the time was now not far distant in which, by the bursting of the threatened judgment on Jerusalem and Judah, he should not only be justified before his adversaries, but also perceive that his labour had not been in vain. And that Jeremiah did indeed victoriously struggle against this temptation, we may gather from remembering that hereafter, when, especially during the siege of Jerusalem under Zedekiah, he had still sorer afflictions to endure, he no longer trembles or bewails the sufferings connected with his calling.

II.—SPECIAL PREDICTIONS OF THE JUDGMENT TO BE ACCOMPLISHED BY THE CHALDEANS, AND OF THE MESSIANIC SALVATION.—CHAP. XXI.-XXXIII.

These predictions are distinguished from the discourses of the first section, in regard to their form, by special headings assigning precisely the occasion and the date of the particular utterances; and in regard to their substance, by the minute detail with which judgment and salvation are foretold. They fall into two groups. In chap. xxi.-xxix. is set forth in detail the judgment to be executed upon Judah and the nations by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon; and in chap. xxx.-xxxiii. the restoration of Judah and Israel on the expiry of the period of punishment.

A. THE PREDICTIONS OF JUDGMENT ON JUDAH AND THE NATIONS.—CHAP. XXI.-XXIX.

Although these prophecies deal first and chiefly with the judgment which the king of Babylon is to execute on Judah, yet they at the same time intimate that a like fate is in store for the surrounding nations. And in them there is besides a

foreshadowing of the judgment to come on Babylon after the expiration of the period appointed for the domination of the Chaldeans, and in brief hints, of the redemption of Israel from captivity in Babylon and other lands into which it has been scattered. They consist of three prophetic pieces, of which the middle one only, chap. xxv., forms one lengthy continuous discourse, while the two others are composed of several shorter or longer utterances; the latter two being arranged around the former as a centre. In the first piece the necessity of judgment is shown by means of an exposure of the profound corruption of the leaders of the people, the kings and the false prophets, and of the people itself; this being done with a view to check the reigning depravity and to bring back Israel to the true God. In the discourse of chap. xxv. the judgment is set forth with comprehensive generalness. In the third piece, chap. xxvi.-xxix., the truth of this declaration is confirmed, and defended against the gainsaying of priests and prophets, by a series of utterances which crush all hopes and all attempts to avert the ruin of Jerusalem and Judah.—This gathering together of the individual utterances and addresses into longer discourse-like compositions, and the grouping of them around the central discourse chap. xxv., is evidently a part of the work of editing the book, but was doubtless carried out under the direction of the prophet by his assistant Baruch.

Chap. xxi.-xxiv. *The Shepherds and Leaders of the People.*

Under this heading may be comprehended the contents of these four chapters; for the nucleus of this compilation is formed by the prophecy concerning the shepherds of the people, the godless last kings of Judah and the false prophets, in chap. xxii. and xxiii., while chap. xxi. is to be regarded as an introduction thereto, and chap. xxiv. a supplement. The aim of this portion of prophetic teaching is to show how the covenant people has been brought to ruin by its corrupt temporal and spiritual rulers, that the Lord must purge it by sore judgments, presently to fall on Judah through Nebuchadnezzar's instrumentality. This is to be done in order to root out the ungodly by sword, famine, and pestilence, and so to make the survivors His true people again by means of right shepherds

whom He will raise up in the true branch of David. The introduction, chap. xxi., contains deliverances regarding the fate of King Zedekiah, the people, and the city, addressed by Jeremiah, at the beginning of the siege of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, to the men sent to him from the king, in reply to the request for intercession with the Lord; the answer being to the effect that God will punish them according to the fruit of their doings. Then follow in order the discourse against the corrupt rulers, especially Kings Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, and Jehoniah, chap. xxii., with a promise that the remainder of the Lord's flock will be gathered again and blessed with a righteous shepherd (xxiii. 1-8), and next threatenings against the false prophets (xxiii. 9-40); the conclusion of the whole being formed by the vision of the two baskets of figs, chap. xxiv., which foreshadows the fate of the people carried away to Babylon with Jehoiachin and of those that remained in the land with Zedekiah.—The several long constituent portions of this "word of God," united into a whole by the heading xxi. 1, belong to various times. The contents of chap. xxi. belong to the first period of the Chaldean siege, *i.e.* the ninth year of Zedekiah; the middle portion, chap. xxii. and xxiii., dates from the reigns of Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin; the conclusion, chap. xxiv., is from the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah, not long after Jehoiachin and the best part of the people had been carried off to Babylon.—As to the joining of chap. xxii. and xxiii. with chap. xxi., Ew. rightly says that Jeremiah made use of the opportunity furnished by the message of the king to him of speaking plainly out regarding the future destiny of the whole kingdom, as well as in an especial way with regard to the royal house, and the great men and leaders of the people; and that he accordingly gathered into this part of the book all he had hitherto publicly uttered concerning the leaders of the people, both kings and temporal princes, and also prophets and priests. This he did in order to disclose, regardless of consequences, the causes for the destruction of the kingdom of Judah and the city Jerusalem by the Chaldeans; while the brief promise of a future gathering again of the remnant of the scattered flock, introduced at xxiii. 1-8, is to show that, spite of the judgment to fall on Judah and Jerusalem, the Lord will yet not wholly cast off His people,

but will at a future time admit them to favour again. For the confirmation of this truth there is added in chap. xxiv. the vision of the two baskets of figs.

Chap. xxi. THE TAKING OF JERUSALEM BY THE CHALDEANS.—Vers. 1 and 2. *The heading specifying the occasion for the following prediction.* “The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah when King Zedekiah sent unto him Pashur the son of Malchiah, and Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, saying: Inquire now of Jahveh for us, for Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon maketh war against us; if so be that the Lord will deal with us according to all His wondrous works, that he may go up from us.” The fighting of Nebuchadrezzar is in ver. 4 stated to be the besieging of the city. From this it appears that the siege had begun ere the king sent the two men to the prophet. Pashur the son of Malchiah is held by Hitz., Graf, Näg., etc., to be a distinguished priest of the class of Malchiah. But this is without sufficient reason; for he is not called a priest, as is the case with Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah, and with Pashur the son of Immer (xxi. 1). Nor is anything proved by the circumstance that Pashur and Malchiah occur in several places as the names of priests, *e.g.* 1 Chron. ix. 12; for both names are also used of persons not priests, *e.g.* Malchiah, Ezra x. 25, 31, and Pashur, Jer. xxxviii. 1, where this son of Gedaliah is certainly a laic. From this passage, where Pashur ben Malchiah appears again, it is clear that the four men there named, who accused Jeremiah for his speech, were government authorities or court officials, since in xxxviii. 4 they are called שָׂרִים. Ros. is therefore right in saying of the Pashur under consideration: *videtur unus ex principibus sive aulicis fuisse*, cf. xxxviii. 4. Only Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah is called priest; and he, acc. to xxix. 25, xxxvii. 3, lii. 24, held a high position in the priesthood. Inquire for us of Jahveh, *i.e.* ask for a revelation for us, as 2 Kings xxii. 13, cf. Gen. xxv. 22. It is not: pray for His help on our behalf, which is expressed by הִתְפַּלֵּל בְּעַרְנִי, xxxvii. 3, cf. xlii. 2. In the request for a revelation the element of intercession is certainly not excluded, but it is not directly expressed. But it is on this that the king founds his hope: Peradventure Jahveh will do

with us (אֶתֵּנוּ for אִתָּנוּ) according to all His wondrous works, *i.e.* in the miraculous manner in which He has so often saved us, *e.g.* under Hezekiah, who also, during the blockade of the city by Sennacherib, had recourse to the prophet Isaiah and besought his intercession with the Lord, 2 Kings xix. 2 ff., Isa. xxxvii. 2 ff. That he (Nebuch.) may go up from us. עָלָה, to march against a city in order to besiege it or take it, but with מָעַל, to withdraw from it, cf. xxxvii. 5, 1 Kings xv. 19. As to the name Nebuchadrezzar, which corresponds more exactly than the Aramaic-Jewish Nebuchadnezzar with the *Nebucadurriusur* of the inscriptions (נְבוּ כְדַר אַצַּר, *i.e.* *Nebo coronam servat*), see on Dan. i. 1, p. 71.

Vers. 3-14. The Lord's reply through Jeremiah consists of three parts: *a.* The answer to the king's hope that the Lord will save Jerusalem from the Chaldeans (vers. 4-7); *b.* The counsel given to the people and the royal family as to how they may avert ruin (vers. 8-12); *c.* The prediction that Jerusalem will be punished for her sins (vers. 13 and 14).

Vers. 3-7. *The answer.*—Ver. 3. "And Jeremiah said to them: Thus shall ye say to Zedekiah: Ver. 4. Thus hath Jahveh the God of Israel said: Behold, I turn back the weapons of war that are in your hands, wherewith ye fight against the king of Babylon and the Chaldeans, which besiege you without the walls, and gather them together into the midst of this city. Ver. 5. And I fight against you with outstretched hand and strong arm, and with anger and fury and great wrath, Ver. 6. And smite the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast; of a great plague they shall die. Ver. 7. And afterward, saith Jahveh, I will give Zedekiah the king of Judah, and his servants, and the people—namely, such as in this city are left of the plague, of the sword, and of the famine—into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those that seek after their life, that he may smite them according to the sharpness of the sword, not spare them, neither have pity nor mercy." This answer is intended to disabuse the king and his servants of all hope of help from God. So far from saving them from the Chaldeans, God will fight against them, will drive back into the city its defenders that are still holding out without the

walls against the enemy; consume the inhabitants by sword, pestilence, famine; deliver the king, with his servants and all that survive inside the lines of the besiegers, into the hand of the latter, and unsparingly cause them be put to death. "I make the weapons of war turn back" is carried on and explained by "I gather them into the city." The sense is: I will bring it about that ye, who still fight without the walls against the beleaguers, must turn back with your weapons and retreat into the city. "Without the walls" is not to be joined to **בְּמִסְבָּה**, because this is too remote, and **בְּמִסְבָּה** is by usage locative, not ablative. It should go with "wherewith ye fight," etc.: wherewith ye fight without the walls against the beleaguering enemies. The siege had but just begun, so that the Jews were still trying to hinder the enemy from taking possession of stronger positions and from a closer blockade of the city. In this they will not succeed, but their weapons will be thrust back into the city.—Ver. 7. The Lord will make known His almighty power not for the rescue but for the chastisement of Judah. The words "with outstretched hand and strong arm" are a standing figure for the miraculous manifestation of God's power at the release of Israel from Egypt, Deut. iv. 34, v. 15, xxvi. 8. This power He will now exercise upon Israel, and execute the punishment threatened against apostasy at the renewal of the covenant by Moses in the land of Moab. The words **בְּזֶרְאוֹ . . . בְּחֵזְקוֹ** are from Deut. xxix. 27. The inhabitants of Jerusalem are to perish during the siege by pestilence and disease, and the remainder, including the king and his servants, to be mercilessly massacred. "Great pestilence" alone is mentioned in ver. 6, but in ver. 7 there are sword and famine along with it. The **וְהָיָה** before **הַמֶּלֶךְ וְעַבְדָּיו** seems superfluous and unsuitable, since besides the king, his servants and the people, there could be none others left. The LXX. have therefore omitted it, and Hitz., Ew., Graf, and others propose to erase it. But the **וְהָיָה** may be taken to be explicative: namely, such as are left, in which case **וְהָיָה** serves to extend the participial clause to all the persons before mentioned, while without the **וְהָיָה** the **הַמֶּלֶךְ וְעַבְדָּיו** could be referred only to **הָעָם**. "Into the hand of their enemies" is rhetorically amplified by "into the hand of those that seek," etc., as in xix. 7, 9, xxxiv. 20, etc.; **לְפִי חֶרֶב**, according to the sharpness

(or edge) of the sword, *i.e.* mercilessly (see on Gen. xxxiv. 26; in Jer. only here), explained by "not spare them," etc., cf. xiii. 14.

Vers. 8-12. *The counsel given to the people and royal family how to escape death.*—Ver. 8. "And unto the people thou shalt say: Thus hath Jahveh said: Behold, I set before you the way of life and the way of death. Ver. 9. He that abideth in this city shall die by sword, by famine, and by pestilence; but he that goeth out and falleth to the Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall live, and have his soul for a prey. Ver. 10. For I have set my face on this city for evil and not for good, saith Jahveh; into the hand of the king of Babylon shall it be given, who shall burn it with fire. Ver. 11. And to the house of the king of Judah: Hear the word of Jahveh: Ver. 12. House of David! thus hath Jahveh said: Hold judgment every morning, and save the despoiled out of the hand of the oppressor, lest my fury break forth as fire, and burn unquenchably, because of the evil of your doings." What the prophet is here to say to the people and the royal house is not directly addressed to the king's envoy, but is closely connected with the answer he was to give to the latter, and serves to strengthen the same. We need not be hampered by the assumption that Jeremiah, immediately after that answer, communicated this advice, so that it might be made known to the people and to the royal house. The counsel given in vers. 8-12 to the people was during the siege repeatedly given by Jeremiah both to the king and to the people, cf. xxxviii. 1 ff., xxxviii. 17 ff., and xxvii. 11 ff., and many of the people acted by his advice, cf. xxxviii. 19, xxxix. 9, lii. 15. But the defenders of the city, the authorities, saw therein treason, or at least a highly dangerous discouragement to those who were fighting, and accused the prophet as a traitor, xxxviii. 4 ff., cf. xxxvii. 13. Still Jeremiah, holding his duty higher than his life, remained in the city, and gave as his opinion, under conviction attained to only by divine revelation, that all resistance is useless, since God has irrevocably decreed the destruction of Jerusalem as a punishment for their sins. The idea of ver. 7 is clothed in words taken from Dent. xxx. 15, cf. xi. 26. יָשָׁב, ver. 9, as opposed to נָצַח, does not mean: to dwell, but: to sit still, abide. To fall to the Chaldeans, *i.e.*

to go over to them, cf. xxxvii. 14, xxxix. 9, 2 Kings xxv. 11; על is interchanged with אל, xxxvii. 13, xxxviii. 19, lii. 15. The *Chet.* חַיִּיה is right, corresponding to יָמֶיה; the *Keri* חַיִּיה is wrong. His life shall be to him for a prey, i.e. he shall carry it thence as a prey, i.e. preserve it. Ver. 10 gives the reason for the advice given. For I have set my face, cf. xliv. 11, recalls Amos ix. 4, only there we have עֵינִי for פָּנַי, as in xxiv. 6. To set the face or eye on one means: to pay special heed to him, in good (cf. xxxix. 12) or in evil sense; hence the addition, "for evil," etc.—Ver. 11 f.¹ The kingly house, i.e. the king and his family, under which are here comprehended not merely women and children, but also the king's companions, his servants and councillors; they are counselled to hold judgment every morning. מִשְׁפָּט מִבֹּקֶר = דִּין דִּין, v. 28, xxii. 16, or מִשְׁפָּט מִבֹּקֶר, Lam. iii. 59, 1 Kings iii. 28. לְבָקֶר distributively, every morning, as Amos iv. 4. To save the despoiled out of the hand of the oppressor

¹ According to Hitz., Gr., and Näg., the passage vers. 11–14 stands in no inner connection with the foregoing, and may, from the contents of it, be seen to belong to an earlier period than that of the siege which took place under Zedekiah, namely, to the time of Jehoiakim, because, *a.* in the period of chap. xxi. 1 ff. such an exhortation and conditional threatening must have been out of place after their destruction had been quite unconditionally foretold to Zedekiah and the people in vers. 4–7; *b.* the defiant tone conveyed in ver. 13 is inconsistent with the cringing despondency shown by Zedekiah in ver. 2; *c.* it is contrary to what we would expect to find the house of the king addressed separately after the king had been addressed in ver. 3, the king being himself comprehended in his "house." But these arguments, on which Hitz. builds ingenious hypotheses, are perfectly valueless. As to *a.*, we have to remark: In vers. 4–7 unconditional destruction is foretold against neither king nor people; it is only said that the Chaldeans will capture the city,—that the inhabitants will be smitten with pestilence, famine, and sword,—and that the king, with his servants and those that are left, will be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, who will smite them unsparingly. But in ver. 12 the threatening is uttered against the king, that if he does not practise righteousness, the wrath of God will be kindled unquenchably, and, ver. 14, that Jerusalem is to be burnt with fire. In vers. 4–7 there is no word of the burning of the city; it is first threatened, ver. 10, against the people, after the choice has been given them of escaping utter destruction. How little the burning of Jerusalem is involved in vers. 4–7 may be seen from the history of the siege and capture of Jerusalem under Jehoiachin, on which occasion, too, the king, with his servants and the people, was given into the hand of the king of Babylon, while the city was permitted to stand, and the deported king

means: to defend his just cause against the oppressor, to defend him from being despoiled; cf. xxii. 3. The form of address: House of David, which is by a displacement awkwardly separated from דָּוִד, is meant to remind the kingly house of its origin, its ancestor David, who walked in the ways of the Lord.—The second half of the verse, “lest my fury,” etc., runs like iv. 4.

Vers. 13 and 14. *The chastisement of Jerusalem*.—Ver. 13. “Behold, I am against thee, inhabitress of the valley, of the rock of the plain, saith Jahveh, ye who say: Who shall come down against us, and who shall come into our dwellings? Ver. 14. And will visit you according to the fruit of your doings, saith Jahveh, and kindle a fire in her forest, that it may devour all her surroundings.” This threatening is levelled against the citizens of Jerusalem, who vaunted the impregnableness of their city. The inhabitress of the valley is the daughter of Zion, the population of Jerusalem personified. The situation of the city is spoken of as בְּקֶרֶן, ravine between mountains, in respect that

remained in life, and was subsequently set free from his captivity by Evil-Merodach. But that Zedekiah, by hearkening to the word of the Lord, can alleviate his doom and save Jerusalem from destruction, this Jeremiah tells him yet later in very plain terms, chap. xxxviii. 17–23, cf. xxxiv. 4 f. Lastly, the release of Hebrew man-servants and maid-servants, recounted in chap. xxxiv. 8 ff., shows that even during the siege there were cases of an endeavour to turn and follow the law, and consequently that an exhortation to hold by the right could not have been regarded as wholly superfluous.—The other two arguments, *b* and *c*, are totally inconclusive. How the confidence of the inhabitants of Jerusalem in the strength of its fortifications (ver. 13) is contradictory of the fact related in ver. 2, does not appear. That Zedekiah should betake himself to the prophet, desiring him to entreat the help of God, is not a specimen of cringing despondency such as excludes all confidence in any earthly means of help. Nor are defiance and despondency mutually exclusive opposites in psychological experience, but states of mind that rapidly alternate. Finally, Näg. seems to have added the last argument (*c*) only because he had no great confidence in the two others, which had been dwelt on by Hitz. and Graf. Why should not Jeremiah have given the king another counsel for warding off the worst, over and above that conveyed in the answer to his question (vers. 4–7)?—These arguments have therefore not pith enough to throw any doubt on the connection between the two passages (vers. 8–10, and 11, 12) indicated by the manner in which “and to the house (בֵּית) of the king of Judah” points back to “and unto this people thou shalt say” (ver. 8), or to induce us to attribute the connection so indicated to the thoughtlessness of the editor.

Jerusalem was encircled by mountains of greater height (Ps. cxv. 2); and as rock of the plain, *i.e.* the region regarded as a level from which Mount Zion, the seat of the kingdom, rose, equivalent to rock of the field, xvii. 3. In the "rock" we think specially of Mount Zion, and in the "valley," of the so-called lower city. The two designations are chosen to indicate the strong situation of Jerusalem. On this the inhabitants pride themselves, who say: Who shall come down against us? יֵהָרֵם for יֵהָרֵם, from יָהָרֵם; cf. *Ew.* § 139, c. Dwellings, cf. xxv. 30, not cities of refuge or coverts of wild animals; מִעֵץ has not this force, but can at most acquire it from the context; see *Del.* on Ps. xxvi. 8. The strength of the city will not shield the inhabitants from the punishment with which God will visit them. "According to the fruit," etc., cf. xvii. 10. I kindle fire in her forest. The city is a forest of houses, and the figure is to be explained by the simile in xxii. 6, but was not suggested by מִעֵץ = *lustra ferarum* (*Hitz.*). All her surroundings, how much more than the city itself!

Chap. xxii.-xxiii. 8. **REBUKE OF THE UNGODLY KINGS JEHOIAKIM AND JEHOIACHIN, AND PROMISE OF A RIGHTEOUS BRANCH OF DAVID.**—This discourse begins with an exhortation to the king, his servants, and the people to do right and justice, and to eschew all unrighteousness, and with the warning, that in case of the contrary the royal palace will be reduced to ruins and Jerusalem destroyed by fire. After touching briefly on the fate of Jehoahaz, who has been deported to Egypt (vers. 10-12), the discourse turns against Jehoiakim, rebukes his tyranny, in that he builds his house with unrighteousness and schemes only bloodshed and violence, and threatens him with ignominious ruin (vers. 13-19). Then, after a threatening against Jerusalem (vers. 20-23), it deals with Jechoniah, who is told he shall be carried to Babylon never to return, and without any descendant to sit on his throne (vers. 24-30). Next, after an outcry of grief at the wicked shepherds, follows the promise that the Lord will gather the remnant of His flock out of all the lands whither they have been driven, that He will restore them to their fields and multiply them, and that He will raise up to them a good shepherd in the righteous branch of David (xxiii. 1-8).—

According to xxi. 1, Jeremiah spoke these words in the house of the king of Judah; whence we see that in this passage we have not merely ideas and scraps of addresses gathered together, such as had been on various occasions orally delivered by the prophet. It further appears from ver. 10 and vers. 13-17, that the portion of the discourse addressed to Jehoiakim was uttered in the first year of his reign; and from ver. 24, where Jechoniah is addressed as king, that the utterance concerning him belongs to the short period (only three months long) of his reign. But the utterance concerning Jechoniah is joined with that concerning Jehoiakim on account of the close relationship in matter between them. The exhortation and warning against injustice, forming the introduction, as regards its contents, fits very well into the time of Jehoiakim (cf. ver. 17 with ver. 3). The promise with which the discourse concludes was apparently not spoken till the time of Jechoniah, shortly before his being taken to Babylon. So that we have here the discourses of Jeremiah belonging to the times of Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin respectively, joined into one continuous whole.

Chap. xxii. 1-9. *The king is warned against injustice, and the violent oppression of the poor and defenceless.*—Ver. 1. "Thus said Jahveh: Go down to the house of the king of Judah and speak there this word, Ver. 2. And say: Hear the word of Jahveh, thou king of Judah, that sittest upon the throne of David, thou, and thy servants, and thy people, that go in by these gates. Ver. 3. Thus hath Jahveh said: Do ye right and justice, and save the despoiled out of the hand of the oppressor; to stranger, orphan, and widow do no wrong, no violence; and innocent blood shed not in this place. Ver. 4. For if ye will do this word indeed, then by the gates of this place there shall come in kings that sit upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, he, and his servants, and his people. Ver. 5. But if ye hearken not to these words, by myself have I sworn, saith Jahveh, that this house shall become a desolation. Ver. 6. For thus hath Jahveh said concerning the house of the king of Judah: A Gilead art thou to me, a head of Lebanon; surely I will make thee a wilderness, cities uninhabited; Ver. 7. And will consecrate against thee destroyers, each with his tools, who shall hew down the choice of thy cedars and cast them

into the fire. Ver. 8. And there shall pass many peoples by this city, and one shall say to the other: Wherefore hath Jahveh done thus unto this great city? Ver. 9. And they will say: Because they have forsaken the covenant of Jahveh their God, and worshipped other gods and served them."

Go down into the house of the king. The prophet could go down only from the temple; cf. xxxvi. 12 and xxvi. 10. Not only the king is to hear the word of the Lord, but his servants too, and the people, who go in by these gates, the gates of the royal castle. The exhortation: to do right and justice, etc., is only an expansion of the brief counsel at xxi. 12, and that brought home to the heart of the whole people in vii. 6, cf. Ezek. xxii. 6 f. The form עֲשֵׂה for עֲשֶׂה, xxi. 12, occurs only here, but is formed analogously to גִּדֹל, and cannot be objected to. אֶל-תִּהְיוּ is strengthened by "do no violence." On "kings riding," etc., cf. xvii. 25.—With ver. 5 cf. xvii. 27, where, however, the threatening is otherwise worded. בִּי לִשְׁבָּעָה, cf. Gen. xxii. 16. בִּי introduces the contents of the oath. "This house" is the royal palace. לְחֶרֶב as in vii. 34, cf. xxvii. 17. The threatening is illustrated in ver. 6 by further description of the destruction of the palace. The royal castle is addressed, and, in respect of its lofty situation and magnificence, is called a Gilead and a head of Lebanon. It lay on the north-eastern eminence of Mount Zion (see on 1 Kings vii. 12, note 1), and contained the so-called forest-house of Lebanon (1 Kings vii. 2–5) and various other buildings built of cedar, or, at least, faced with cedar planks (cf. vers. 14, 23); so that the entire building might be compared to a forest of cedars on the summit of Lebanon. In the comparison to Gilead, Gilead can hardly be adduced in respect of its great fertility as a pasturing land (Num. xxxii. 1; Mic. vii. 14), but in virtue of the thickly wooded covering of the hill-country of Gilead on both sides of the Jabbok. This is still in great measure clothed with oak thickets and, according to Buckingham, the most beautiful forest tracts that can be imagined; cf. C. v. Raumer, *Pal. S.* 82.¹ לֵן is a particle of

¹ In 1834 Eli Smith travelled through it, and thus writes: "Jebel 'Ajlun presents the most charming rural scenery that I have seen in Syria. A continued forest of noble trees, chiefly the evergreen oak, covers a large part of it, while the ground beneath is clothed with luxuriant grass and decked

asseveration. This glorious forest of cedar buildings is to become a *מִדְבָּר*, a treeless steppe, cities uninhabited. "Cities" refers to the thing compared, not to the emblem; and the plural, as being the form for indefinite generality, presents no difficulty. And the attachment thereto of a singular predicate has many analogies in its support, cf. Ew. § 317, *a*. The *Keri* נִשְׁבַּח is an uncalled for emendation of the *Chet*. נִשְׁבַּח, cf. vi. 5.—"I consecrate," in respect that the destroyers are warriors whom God sends as the executors of His will, see on vi. 4. With "a man and his weapons," cf. Ezek. ix. 2. In keeping with the figure of a forest, the destruction is represented as the hewing down of the choicest cedars; cf. Isa. x. 34.—Thus is to be accomplished in Jerusalem what Moses threatened, Deut. xxix. 33; the destroyed city will become a monument of God's wrath against the transgressors of His covenant. Ver. 8 is modelled upon Deut. xxix. 23 ff., cf. 1 Kings ix. 8 f., and made to bear upon Jerusalem, since, along with the palace, the city too is destroyed by the enemy.

From ver. 10 onwards the exhortation to the evil shepherds becomes a prophecy concerning the kings of that time, who by their godless courses hurried on the threatened destruction. The prophecy begins with King Jehoahaz, who, after a reign of three months, had been disrowned by Pharaoh Necho and carried captive to Egypt; 2 Kings xxiii. 30-35, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 1-4.

Vers. 10-12. *On Jehoahaz*.—Ver. 10. "Weep not for the dead, neither bemoan him; weep rather for him that is gone away, for he shall no more return and see the land of his birth. Ver. 11. For thus saith Jahveh concerning Shallum, the son of Josiah king of Judah, who became king in his father Josiah's stead, and who went forth from this place: He shall not return thither more; Ver. 12. But in the place whither they have carried him captive, there shall he die and see this land no more." The clause: weep not for the dead, with which the prophecy on Shallum is begun, shows that the mourning for

with a rich variety of wild flowers. As we went from el-Husn to 'Ajlun our path lay along the summit of the mountain; and we often overlooked a large part of Palestine on one side and the whole of Haurân."—Rob. *Phys. Geog.* p. 54.

King Josiah was kept up and was still heartily felt amongst the people (2 Chron. xxxv. 24 ff.), and that the circumstances of his death were still fresh in their memory. לָמַח without the article, although Josiah, slain in battle at Megiddo, is meant, because there was no design particularly to define the person. Him that goes or is gone away. He, again, is defined and called Shallum. This Shallum, who became king in his father Josiah's place, can be none other than Josiah's successor, who is called Joahaz in 2 Kings xxiii. 30 ff., 2 Chron. xxxvi. 1; as was seen by Chrysost. and Aben-Ezra, and, since Grotius, by most commentators. The only question is, why he should here be called Shallum. According to Frc. Junius, Hitz., and Graf, Jeremiah compares Joahaz on account of his short reign with Shallum in Israel, who reigned but one month (2 Kings xv. 13), and ironically calls him Shallum, as Jezebel called Jehu, *Zimri* murderer of his lord, 2 Kings ix. 31. This explanation is unquestionably erroneous, since irony of such a sort is inconsistent with what Jeremiah says of Shallum. More plausible seems Hgstb.'s opinion, *Christ.* ii. p. 401, that Jeremiah gives Joahaz the name Shallum, *i.e.* the requited (cf. שָׁלַם, 1 Chron. vi. 13, = שָׁלַם, 1 Chron. ix. 11), as *nomen reale*, to mark him out as the man the Lord had punished for the evil of his doings. But this conjecture too is overthrown by the fact, that in the genealogy of the kings of Judah, 1 Chron. iii. 15, we find among the four sons of Josiah the name שָׁלַם instead of Joahaz. Now this name cannot have come there from the present passage, for the genealogies of Chronicles are derived from old family registers. That this is so in the case of Josiah's sons, appears from the mention there of a fourth, Johanan, over and above the three known to history, of whom we hear nothing more. In the genealogical tables persons are universally mentioned by their own proper names, not according to "renamings" or surnames, except in the case that these have received the currency and value of historical names, as *e.g.* Israel for Jacob. On the ground of the genealogical table 1 Chron. iii. we must accordingly hold that Joahaz was properly called Shallum, and that probably at his accession he assumed the name יֹאחָז, "Jahveh sustains, holds." But Jeremiah might still have used the name Shallum in preference to the assumed *Joahaz*, because

the former had verified itself in that king's fate. With ver. 11b and 12, cf. 2 Kings xxiii. 33-35.—The brief saying in regard to Joahaz forms the transition from the general censure of the wicked rulers of Judah who brought on the ruin of the kingdom, to the special predictions concerning the ungodly kings Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin, in whose time the judgment burst forth. In counselling not to weep for the dead king (Josiah), but for the departed one (Joahaz), Jeremiah does not mean merely to bewail the lot of the king carried prisoner to Egypt, but to foreshadow the misery that awaits the whole people. From this point of view Calv. well says: *si lugenda est urbis hujus clades, potius lugendi sunt qui manebunt superstites quam qui morientur. Mors enim erit quasi requies, erit portus ad finienda omnia mala: Vita autem longior nihil aliud erit quam continua miseriarum series*; and further, that in the words: he shall no more return and see the land of his birth, Jeremiah shows: *exilium fore quasi tabem, quæ paulatim consumat miseros Judæos. Ita mors fuisset illis dulcior longe, quam sic diu cruciari et nihil habere relaxationis*. In the lot of the two kings the people had to recognise what was in store for itself.

Vers. 13-19. *The woe uttered upon Jehoiakim.*—Ver. 13. "Woe unto him that buildeth his house with unrighteousness and his upper chambers with wrong, that maketh his fellow labour for nought, and giveth him not his hire; Ver. 14. That saith: I will build me a wide house and spacious upper chambers, and cutteth him out many windows, and covereth it with cedars, and painteth it with vermilion. Ver. 15. Art thou a king if thou viest in cedar? Did not thy father eat and drink, and do right and justice? Then it went well with him. Ver. 16. He did justice to the poor and wretched, then it was well. Is not this to know me? saith Jahveh. Ver. 17. For on nothing are thine eyes and thy heart set but on gain and on the blood of the innocent, to shed it, and on oppression and violence, to do them. Ver. 18. Therefore thus saith Jahveh concerning Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah: They shall not mourn for him, saying: Alas, my brother! and alas, sister! they shall not mourn for him: Alas, lord! and alas for his glory! Ver. 19. An ass's burial shall his burial be, dragged and cast far away from the gates of Jerusalem."

The prediction as to Jehoiakim begins with a woe upon the unjust oppression of the people. The oppression consisted in his building a magnificent palace with the sweat and blood of his subjects, whom he compelled to do forced labour without giving the labourers wages. The people must have felt this burden all the more severely that Jehoiakim, to obtain the throne, had bound himself to pay to Pharaoh a large tribute, the gold and silver for which he raised from the population according to Pharaoh's own valuation, 2 Kings xxiii. 33 ff. With "Woe to him that buildeth," etc., cf. Hab. ii. 12, Mic. iii. 10. "That maketh his fellow labour," lit. through his neighbour he works, *i.e.* he causes the work to be done by his neighbour (fellow-man) for nought, without giving him wages, forces him to unpaid statute-labour. עָבַד as in Lev. xxv. 39, 46. פָּעַל, labour, work, gain, then wages, cf. Job vii. 2. Jehoiakim sought to increase the splendour of his kingship by palace-building. To this the speech points, put in his mouth at ver. 14: I will build me בֵּית מְרוֹת, a house of extensions, *i.e.* a palace in the grand style, with spacious halls, vast chambers. מְרוֹת from רָוַת, to find vent, cheer up, 1 Sam. xvi. 23; not airy, but spacious, for quite a modest house might have airy chambers. וַיִּקְרַע is a continuation of the participle; literally: and he cuts himself out windows, makes huge openings in the walls for windows. This verb is used in iv. 30 of opening up the eyes with paint. הִלְוִי presents some difficulty, seeing that the suffix of the first person makes no sense. It has therefore been held to be a contracted plural form (Gesen. *Lehrgeb.* S. 523) or for a dual (Ew. § 177, *a*), but without any proof of the existence of such formations, since נוֹבֵי, Amos vii. 1, Nah. iii. 17, is to be otherwise explained (see on Amos vii. 1). Following on the back of J. D. Mich., Hitz., Graf, and Böttcher (*ausf. Gramm.* § 414) propose to connect the ו before קָפַן with this word and to read הִלְוִי: and tears open for himself his windows; in support of which it is alleged that one *cod.* so reads. But this one *cod.* can decide nothing, and the suffix *his* is superfluous, even unsuitable, seeing that there can be no thought of another person's building; whereas the copula cannot well be omitted before קָפַן. For the rule adduced for this, that the manner of the principal action is frequently explained by appending

infinitives *absoll.* (Ew. § 280, *a*), does not meet the present case; the covering with cedar, etc., does not refer to the windows, and so cannot be an explanation of the cutting out for himself. We therefore hold, with Böttcher (*Proben*, S. 40), that חֲלוֹנֵי is an adjective formation, with the force of: abundant in windows, since this formation is completely accredited by בְּיָלִי and חֲרִי (cf. Ew. § 164, *c*); and the objection alleged against this by Graf, that then no object is specified for “cutteth out,” is not of much weight, it being easy to supply the object from the preceding “house:” and he cuts it out for himself abounding in windows. There needs be no change of וְקָפַן into וְקָפַן. For although the *infin. absol.* would be quite in place as continuation of the *verb. fin.* (cf. Ew. § 351, *c*), yet it is not necessary. The word is attached in zeugma to וְקָרַע or חֲלוֹנֵי: and he covers with cedar, not: faces or overlays, for this verb does not mean to plank or floor, for which וְקָפַח is the usual word, but hide, cover, and is used 1 Kings vi. 9, vii. 3, for roofing. The last statement is given in *infin. absol.*: וְמִשָּׁחַ, and besmears it, paints it (the building) with וְשָׁחַ, red ochre, a brilliant colour (LXX. *μίλτος*, *i.e.* acc. to Kimchi, red lead; see Gesen. *thes. s.v.*).—In ver. 15 Jeremiah pursues the subject: kingship and kingcraft do not consist in the erection of splendid palaces, but in the administration of right and justice. The reproachful question וְהִתְמַלֵּךְ has not the meaning: wilt thou reign long? or wilt thou consolidate thy dominion? but: dost thou suppose thyself to be a king, to show thyself a king, if thy aim and endeavour is solely fixed on the building of a stately palace? “Viest,” as in xii. 5. בְּצֵדָר, not: with the cedar, for תַּחְרָה is construed with the accus. of that with which one vies, but: in cedar, *i.e.* in the building of cedar palaces. It was not necessary to say with whom he vied, since the thought of Solomon’s edifices would suggest itself. The LXX. have changed בָּחַר by a pointless *quid pro quo* into בָּחַר, ἐν ᾿Αχαζ, for which *Cod. Alex.* and *Arabs* have ἐν ᾿Αχαάβ. The fact that Ahab had built a palace veneered with ivory (1 Kings xxii. 39) is not sufficient to approve this reading, which Ew. prefers. Still less cause is there to delete בָּחַר as a gloss (Hitz.) in order to obtain the rendering, justified neither by grammar nor in fact, “if thou contendest with thy father.” To confirm what he has

said, the prophet sets before the worthless king the example of his godly father Josiah. "Thy father, did not he eat and drink," *i.e.* enjoy life (cf. Eccles. ii. 24, iii. 13)? yet at the same time he administered right and justice, like his forefather David; 2 Sam. viii. 15. Then went it well with him and the kingdom. *וְהָיָה טוֹב*, ver. 16, is wider than *וְהָיָה טוֹב לִי*: in respect that he did justice to the poor and wretched, things went well, were well managed in the kingdom at large. In so doing consists "the knowing of me." The knowledge of Jahveh is the practical recognition of God which is displayed in the fear of God and a pious life. The infinitive *nomîn*. *יָדַעַת* has the article because a special emphasis lies on the word (cf. Ew. § 277, c), the true knowledge of God required to have stress laid on it.—But Jehoiakim is the reverse of his father. This thought, lying in ver. 16, is illustrated in ver. 17. For thine eyes are set upon nothing but gain. *בְּצֵעַ*, gain with the suggestion of unrighteousness about it, cf. vi. 13, viii. 10. His whole endeavour was after wealth and splendour. The means of attaining this aim was injustice, since he not only withheld their wages from his workers (ver. 13), but caused the innocent to be condemned in the judgment that he might grasp their goods to himself, as *e.g.* Ahab had done with Naboth. He also put to death the prophets who rebuked his unrighteousness, xxvi. 23, and used every kind of lawless violence. "Oppression" is amplified by *הַפְּרִיעָה* (from *רָעַן*, cf. Deut. xxviii. 33, 1 Sam. xii. 3), crushing, "what we call flaying people" (Hitz.); cf. on this subject, Mic. iii. 3.—Ver. 18 f. As punishment for this, his end will be full of horrors; when he dies he will not be bemoaned and mourned for, and will lie unburied. To have an ass's burial means: to be left unburied in the open field, or cast into a flaying-ground, inasmuch as they drag out the dead body and cast it far from the gates of Jerusalem. The words: Alas, my brother! alas, etc.! are *ipsissima verba* of the regular mourners who were procured to bewail the deaths of men and women. The LXX. took objection to the "alas, sister," and left it out, applying the words literally to Jehoiakim's death; whereas the words are but a rhetorical individualizing of the general idea: they will make no death-laments for him, and the omission destroys the parallelism. His glory, *i.e.* the king's. The idea

is: neither his relatives nor his subjects will lament his death. The *infinn. absol.* מְחַיֵּה וְהַשְׁלִיךְ, dragging forth and casting (him), serve to explain: the burial of an ass, etc. In xxxvi. 30, where Jeremiah repeats this prediction concerning Jehoiakim, it is said: His dead body shall be cast out (exposed) to the heat by day and to the cold by night, *i.e.* rot unburied under the open sky.

As to the fulfilment of this prophecy, we are told, indeed, in 2 Kings xxiv. 6 that Jehoiakim slept with his fathers, and Jehoiachin, his son, was king in his stead. But the phrase "to sleep with his fathers" denotes merely departure from this life, without saying anything as to the manner of the death. It is not used only of kings who died a peaceful death on a sickbed, but of Ahab (1 Kings xxii. 40), who, mortally wounded in the battle, died in the war-chariot. There is no record of Jehoiakim's funeral obsequies or burial in 2 Kings xxiv., and in Chron. there is not even mention made of his death. Three years after the first siege of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, and after he had become tributary to the king of Babylon, Jehoiakim rose in insurrection, and Nebuchadnezzar sent against him the troops of the Chaldeans, Aramæans, Moabites, and Ammonites. It was not till after the accession of Jehoiachin that Nebuchadnezzar himself appeared before Jerusalem and besieged it (2 Kings xxiv. 1, 2, and 10). So it is in the highest degree probable that Jehoiakim fell in battle against the Chaldean-Syrian armies before Jerusalem was besieged, and while the enemies were advancing against the city; also that he was left to lie unburied outside of Jerusalem; see on 2 Kings xxiv. 6, where other untenable attempts to harmonize are discussed. The absence of direct testimony to the fulfilment of the prophecy before us can be no ground for doubting that it was fulfilled, when we consider the great brevity of the notices of the last kings' reigns given by the authors of the books of Kings and Chronicles. Graf's remark hereon is excellent: "We have a warrant for the fulfilment of this prediction precisely in the fact that it is again expressly recounted in chap. xxxvi., a historical passage written certainly at a later time (xxxvi. 30 seems to contain but a slight reference to the prediction in xxii. 18, 19, 30); or, while xxii. 12, 25 ff. tallies so completely with the history, is xxii. 18 f. to be held as contradicting it?"

Vers. 20–23. *The ruin about to fall on Judah.*—Ver. 20. “Go up on Lebanon and cry, and lift up thy voice in Bashan and cry from Abarim; for broken are all thy lovers. Ver. 21. I spake to thee in thy prosperity; thou saidst: I will not hear; that was thy way from thy youth up, that thou hearkenedst not to my voice. Ver. 22. All thy shepherds the wind shall sweep away, and thy lovers shall go into captivity; yea, then shalt thou be put to shame and ashamed for all thy wickedness. Ver. 23. Thou that dwellest on Lebanon and makest thy nest on cedars, how shalt thou sigh when pangs come upon thee, pain as of a woman in travail!”—It is the people personified as the daughter of Zion, the collective population of Jerusalem and Judah, that is addressed, as in vii. 29. She is to lift up her wailing cry upon the highest mountains, that it may be heard far and near. The peaks of the mountain masses that bordered Palestine are mentioned, from which one could have a view of the land; namely, Lebanon northwards, the mountains of Bashan (Ps. lxxviii. 16) to the north-east, those of Abarim to the south-east, amongst which was Mount Nebo, whence Moses viewed the land of Canaan, Num. xxvii. 12, Deut. xxxii. 49. She is to lament because all her lovers are destroyed. The lovers are not the kings (Ros., Ew., Neum., Näg.), nor the idols (Umbr.), but the allied nations (J. D. Mich., Maur., Hitz.), for whose favour Judah had intrigued (iv. 30)—Egypt (ii. 36) and the little neighbouring states (xxvii. 3). All these nations were brought under the yoke by Nebuchadnezzar, and could no longer give Judah help (xxviii. 14, xxx. 14). On the form *עֲצָרָה*, see Ew. 41, c.—Ver. 21. The cause of this calamity: because Judah in its prosperity had not hearkened to the voice of its God. *שְׁלוֹתָ*, from *שָׁלוֹחַ*, security, tranquillity, state of well-being free from anxiety; the plur. denotes the peaceful, secure relations. Thus Judah had behaved from youth up, *i.e.* from the time it had become the people of God and been led out of captivity; see ii. 2, Hos. ii. 17.—In ver. 22 *תִּרְעָה* is chosen for the sake of the word-play with *רְעִי*, and denotes to depasture, as in ii. 16. As the storm-wind, especially the parching east wind, depastures, so to speak, the grass of the field, so will the storm about to break on Judah sweep away the shepherds, carry them off; cf. xiii. 24, Isa. xxvii. 8, Job xxvii. 21. The shep-

herds of the people are not merely the kings, but all its leaders, the authorities generally, as in x. 21; and "thy shepherds" is not equivalent to "thy lovers," but the thought is this: Neither its allies nor its leaders will be able to help; the storm of calamity will sweep away the former, the latter must go captive. So that there is no need to alter רִעֵיךָ into רֵעֶיךָ (Hitz.). With the last clause cf. ii. 36. Then surely will the daughter of Zion, feeling secure in her cedar palaces, sigh bitterly. The inhabitants of Jerusalem are said to dwell in Lebanon and to have their nests in cedars in reference to the palaces of cedar belonging to the great and famous, who at the coming destruction will suffer most. As to the forms יִשְׁכְּתִי and מִן־נִתִּי, see on x. 17. The explanation of the form נִתִּי is disputed. Ros., Ges., and others take it for the Niph. of נָתַן, with the force: to be compassionated, thus: how deserving of pity or compassion wilt thou be! But this rendering does not give a very apt sense, even if it were not the case that the sig. to be worthy of pity is not approved by usage, and that it is nowhere taken from the Niph. We therefore prefer the derivation of the word from נָתַן, Niph. נִתְּנָה, contr. נִתִּי, a derivative founded on the LXX. rendering: ὅτι καταστενάζεις, and Vulg. *quomodo congemuisti*. The only question that then remains is, whether the form נִתִּי has arisen by transposition from נִתְּנָה, so as to avoid the coming together of the same letter at the beginning (Ew., Hitz., Gr.); or whether, with Böttch. *ausf. Gramm.* § 1124, B, it is to be held as a reading corrupted from נִתְּנָה. With "pangs," etc., cf. xiii. 21, vi. 24.

Vers. 24-30. *Against Jehoiachin or Jechoniah.*—Ver. 24. "As I live, saith Jahveh, though Conjahu, the son of Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, were a signet ring on my right hand, yet would I pluck him thence, Ver. 25. And give thee into the hand of them that seek thy life, and into the hand of them of whom thou art afraid, and into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, and into the hand of the Chaldeans; Ver. 26. And will cast thee and thy mother that bare thee into another land where ye were not born; and there shall ye die. Ver 27. And into the land whither they lift up their soul to return, thither shall they not return. Ver. 28. Is this man Conjahu a vessel despised and to be broken, or an utensil

wherein one has no pleasure? Ver. 29. O land, land, land, hear the word of Jahveh! Ver. 30. Thus hath Jahveh said: Write down this man as childless, as a man that hath no prosperity in his life; for no man of his seed shall prosper that sitteth upon the throne of David and ruleth widely over Judah."

The son and successor of Jehoiakim is called in 2 Kings xxiv. 6 ff., 2 Chron. xxxvi. 8 f., Jer. lii. 31, *Jehojachin*, and in Ezek. i. 2, *Jojachin*; here, vers. 24, 28, and xxxvii. 1, *Conjahu*; in xxiv. 1, *Jeconjahu*; and in xxvii. 20, xxviii. 4, xxix. 2, Esth. ii. 6, 1 Chron. iii. 16, *Jeconjah*. The names Jeconjahu and abbreviated Jeconjah are equivalent to Jojachin and Jehojachin, i.e. Jahveh will establish. Jeconjah was doubtless his original name, and so stands in the family register, 1 Chron. iii. 16, but was at his accession to the throne changed into Jehojachin or Jojachin, to make it liker his father's name. The abbreviation of Jeconjahu into Conjahu is held by Hgstb. *Christol.* ii. p. 402, to be a change made by Jeremiah in order by cutting off the '(will establish)' to cut off the hope expressed by the name, to make "a Jeconiah without the J, a 'God will establish' without the will." For two reasons we cannot adopt this as the true view: 1. The general reason, that if Jeremiah had wished to adumbrate the fate of the three kings (Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, and Jehoiachin) by making changes in their names, he would then have changed the name of Jehoiakim in like manner as he did that of Jehoahaz into Shallum, and that of Jehoiachin into Conjahu. The argument by which Hgstb. seeks to justify the exception in the one case will not hold its own. Had Jeremiah thought it unseemly to practise a kind of conceit, for however solemn a purpose, on the name of the then reigning monarch, then neither could he have ventured on the like in the case of Jehoiachin; for the present prediction was not, as Hgstb. assumed, uttered before his accession, but, as may be seen from the title the king of Judah, ver. 24, after he had ascended the throne, was actually king. Besides, 2. the name Conjahu occurs also at xxxvii. 1, in a historical heading, as of equal dignity with Jeconjahu, xxix. 2, xxviii. 4, etc., where a name proper only to prophetic discourse would not have been in place. The passages in which the prophets express the

character and destiny of a person in a name specially formed for the purpose, are of another kind. There we have always: they shall call his name, or: his name shall be; cf. xxxiii. 16, Isa. ix. 5, lxii. 4, Ezek. xlviii. 35. That the name *Jeconjah* has not merely the prophet's authority, is vouched for by 1 Chron. iii. 15, Esth. ii. 6, and by the historical notices, Jer. xxiv. 1, xxvii. 20, xxviii. 4, xxix. 2. And the occurrence of the name Jojachin only in 2 Kings xxiv., 2 Chron. xxxvi., Jer. lii. 31, and Ezek. i. 2 is in consequence of the original documents used by the authors of these books, where, so to speak, the official names were made use of; whereas Jeremiah preferred the proper, original name which the man bore as the prince-royal and son of Jehoiakim, and which was therefore the current and best known one.

The utterance concerning Jechoniah is more distinct and decided than that concerning Jehoiakim. With a solemn oath the Lord not only causes to be made known to him that he is to be cast off and taken into exile, but further, that his descendants are debarred from the throne for ever. Nothing is said of his own conduct towards the Lord. In 2 Kings xxiv. 9 and 2 Chron. xxxvi. 9 it is said of him that he did that which was displeasing to the Lord, even as his father had done. Ezekiel confirms this sentence when in xix. 5-9 he portrays him as a young lion that devoured men, forced widows, and laid cities waste. The words of Jahveh: Although Conjahu were a signet ring on my right hand, convey no judgment as to his character, but simply mean: Although he were as precious a jewel in the Lord's eyes as a signet ring (cf. Hag. ii. 23), the Lord would nevertheless cast him away. ' before introduces the body of the oath, as in ver. 5, and is for rhetorical effect repeated before the apodosis, as in 2 Sam. iii. 9, ii. 27, etc. Although he were, *sc.* what he is not; not: although he is (Graf); for there is no proof for the remark: that as being the prince set by Jahveh over His people, he has really as close a connection with Him. Hitz.'s explanation is also erroneous: "even if, seeking help, he were to cling so closely to me as a ring does to the finger." A most unnatural figure, not supported by reference to Cant. viii. 6. As to אֶת־יְהוֹנָתָן, from יָחַן with; *epenth.*, cf. Ew. § 250, b.—From ver. 25 on, the discourse

is addressed directly to Jechoniah, to make his rejection known to him. God will deliver him into the hand of his enemies, whom he fears, namely, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldeans, and cast him with his mother into a strange land, where he shall die. The mother was called *Nehushta*, 2 Kings xxiv. 8, and is brought forward in xxix. 2 as נְבִיטָה. On the fulfilment of this threatening, see 2 Kings xxiv. 12, 15, Jer. xxiv. 1, xxix. 2. The construction אֶחָדָן אֶחָדָן is like that of הִנֵּנִי נְבִיטָה, ii. 21; and the absence of the article from אֶחָדָן is no sufficient reason for holding it to be a gloss (Hitz.), or for taking the article in אֶחָדָן to be a slip caused by אֶחָדָן, ver. 27. To lift up their souls, i.e. to direct their longings, wishes, towards a thing, cf. Deut. xxiv. 15, Hos. iv. 8, etc.—The further sentence on Jechoniah was not pronounced after he had been carried captive, as Näg. infers from the perfects הוֹטֵלִי and הִשְׁלִכֵנִי. The perfects are prophetic. The question: Is this man a vessel despised and to be broken (עֵצָב, *vas fictile*)? is an expression of sympathising regret on the part of the prophet for the unhappy fate of the king; but we may not hence conclude that Jeremiah regarded him as better than his father. The prophet's sympathy for his fate regarded less the person of the unfortunate king than it did the fortunes of David's royal seed, in that, of Jechoniah's sons, none was to sit on the throne of David (ver. 30). Ew. has excellently paraphrased the sense: "Although there is many a sympathising heart in the land that bitterly laments the hard fate of the dear young king, who along with his infant children has been (? will be) dragged away, yet it is God's unchangeable decree that neither he nor any of his sons shall ascend the throne of David." נִפְרָן, not: broken, but: that shall be broken (cf. Ew. § 335, *b*). Wherefore are they—he and his seed—cast out? At his accession Jehoiachin was eighteen years old, not eight, as by an error stands in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 9, see on 2 Kings xxiv. 8; so that when taken captive, he might well enough have children, or at least one son, since his wives are expressly mentioned in the account of the captivity, 2 Kings xxiv. 15. That the sons mentioned in 1 Chron. iii. 16 and 17 were born to him in exile, cannot be inferred from that passage, rightly understood, see on that passage. The fact that no sons are mentioned in connection with

the carrying captive is simply explained by the fact that they were still infants.—Ver. 29. The land is to take the king's fate sore to heart. The triple repetition of the summons: Land, gives it a special emphasis, and marks the following sentence as of high importance; cf. vii. 4, Ezek. xxi. 32, Isa. vi. 3. Write him down, record him in the family registers, as childless, *i.e.* as a man with whom his race becomes extinct. This is more definitely intimated in the parallel member, namely, that he will not have the fortune to have any of his posterity sit on the throne of David. This does not exclude the possibility of his having sons; it merely implies that none of them should obtain the throne. עָרִירִי sig. lit. solitary, forsaken. Thus a man might well be called who has lost his children by death. Acc. to 1 Chron. iii. 16 f., Jechoniah had two sons, Zedekiah and Assir, of whom the former died childless, the second had but one daughter; and from her and her husband, of the line of Nathan, was born Shealtiel, who also died childless; see the expos. of 1 Chron. iii. 16 f. Jechoniah was followed on the throne by his uncle Mattaniah, whom Nebuchadnezzar installed under the name of Zedekiah. He it was that rose in insurrection against the king of Babylon, and after the capture of Jerusalem was taken prisoner while in flight; and being carried before Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah, saw his sons put to death before his eyes, was then made blind, thrown in chains, and carried a prisoner to Babylon, 2 Kings xxv. 4 ff.

Chap. xxiii. 1-8. *The gathering again of the flock, scattered by the evil shepherds, by means of the righteous branch from the stock of David.*—Ver. 1. "Woe to shepherds that destroy and scatter the flock of my pasturing! saith Jahveh. Ver. 2. Therefore thus saith Jahveh, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds that feed my people: Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and not visited them; behold, I will visit on you the evil of your doings, saith Jahveh. Ver. 3. And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all lands whither I have driven them, and bring them back to their pasture, that they may be fruitful and increase; Ver. 4. And will raise up over them shepherds that shall feed them, and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, nor be lacking, saith Jahveh. Ver. 5. Behold, days come, saith Jahveh, that I raise up unto David a

righteous branch, that shall reign as king, and deal wisely, and do right and justice in the land. Ver. 6. In his days Judah shall have welfare, and Israel dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called: Jahveh our Righteousness. Ver. 7. Therefore, behold, days come, saith Jahveh, that they shall no more say: By the life of Jahveh who brought up the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt, Ver. 8. But: By the life of Jahveh who brought up and led forth the seed of the house of Israel out of the land towards midnight, and out of all the lands whither I had driven them, and they shall dwell in their own land."

This portion is the conclusion of the prophecy concerning the shepherds of Israel, ch. xxii. In vers. 1 and 2 what has been foretold concerning the last kings of Judah is condensed into one general sentence, so as thus to form a point of connection for the declaration of salvation which follows at ver. 3, consisting in the gathering again of the people, neglected and scattered by the evil shepherds, by means of the righteous branch of David. The Lord cries woe upon the shepherds. רֹעִים without article, because the matter concerns all evil shepherds, and is not applied till ver. 2 to the evil rulers of Judah. Venema rightly says: *Generale vœ pastoribus malis præmittitur, quod mox ad pastores Judæ applicatur.* It is so clear from the context as to have been generally admitted by recent comm., that by shepherds are meant not merely the false prophets and priests, nor even these along with the kings; cf. on iii. 15, xxv. 34 ff., and Ezek. xxxiv. The flock of my pasturing, in other words, the flock which I feed; for מְרִעִית sig. both the feeding (cf. Hos. xiii. 6) and the place where the flock feeds, cf. xxv. 36, Ps. lxxiv. 1. Israel is called the flock of Jahveh's pasturing inasmuch as He exerts a special care over it. The flock bad shepherds, the ungodly monarchs on the throne of David, have brought to ruin and scattered. The scattering is in ver. 2, cf. with ver. 3, called a driving out into the lands; but the "destroying" must be discovered from the train of thought, for the clause: ye have not visited them (ver. 2), intimates merely their neglect of the sheep committed to their charge. What the "destroying" more especially is, we may gather from the conduct of King Jehoiakim, described in xxii. 13 ff.; it consists in oppression, violence, and the shedding of

innocent blood; cf. Ezek. xxxiv. 2, 3. With לָנֶזֶן, ver. 2, is made the application of the general sentence, ver. 1, to the shepherds of Israel. Because they are such as have scattered, driven away, and not visited the flock of the Lord, therefore He will punish in them the wickedness of their doings. In the לֹא פָקְדָתָם אֹתָם is summed up all that the rulers have omitted to do for the flock committed to their care; cf. the specification of what they have not done, Ezek. xxxiv. 4. It was their duty, as Ven. truly says, to see *ut vera religio, pabulum populi spirituale, recte et rite exerceretur*. Instead of this, they have, by introducing idolatry, directly encouraged ungodliness, and the immorality which flows therefrom. Here in "ye have not visited them" we have the negative moment made prominent, so that in ver. 3 may follow what the Lord will do for His scattered flock. Cf. the further expansion of this promise in Ezek. xxxiv. 12 ff. We must note "I have driven them," since in ver. 2 it was said that the bad shepherds had driven the flock away. The one does not exclude the other. By their corrupting the people, the wicked shepherds had occasioned the driving out; and this God has inflicted on the people as punishment. But the people, too, had their share in the guilt; but to this attention is not here directed, since the question deals only with the shepherds.—Ver. 4. When the Lord shall gather His people out of the dispersion, then will He raise up shepherds over them who will so feed them that they shall no longer need to fear or to be dismayed before enemies who might be strong enough to subjugate, slay, and carry them captive. The figurative expressions are founded on the idea that the sheep, when they are neglected by the shepherds, are torn and devoured by wild beasts; cf. Ezek. xxxiv. 8. They shall not be lacking; cf. for נִפְקֵר with this force, 1 Sam. xxv. 7; in substance = not be lost. לֹא יִפְקֵר is chosen with a view to לֹא פָקְדָתָם אֹתָם (ver. 2): because the shepherds did not take charge of the sheep, therefore the sheep are scattered and lost. Hereafter this shall happen no more. The question as to how this promise is to be accomplished is answered by vers. 5 and 6. The substance of these verses is indeed introduced by the phrase: behold, days come, as something new and important, but not as something not to happen till after the things foretold in ver. 4. According to Jeremiah's usage throughout, that

phrase does not indicate any progress in time as compared with what precedes, but draws attention to the weightiness of what is to be announced. There is also a suggestion of "the contrast between the hope and the existing condition of affairs, which does not itself justify that hope. However gloomy the present is, yet there is a time coming" (Hgstb.). The promise: I make to arise (raise up) to David a righteous branch, rests upon the promise, 2 Sam. vii. 12, 1 Chron. xvii. 12: I raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons—which the Lord will hereafter fulfil to David. Graf tries to show by many, but not tenable arguments, that צמח has here a collective force. That he is wrong, we may see from the passages Zech. iii. 8 and vi. 12, where the same "branch" foretold by Jeremiah is called the man whose name is צמח; and even without this we may discover the same from the context of the present passage, both from "He shall reign as king," and still more from: they shall call his name *Jahveh Tsidkenu*. Neither of these sayings can be spoken of a series of kings. Besides, we have the passages xxx. 9 and Ezek. xxxiv. 23 f., xxxvii. 24, where the servant to be raised up to David by Jahveh is called "my servant David." Although then צמח has a collective force when it means a plant of the field, it by no means follows that "it has always a collective force" in its transferred spiritual signification. And the passage, xxxiii. 17, where the promise is explained by: David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of Israel (cf. xxxiii. 21), does not prove that the branch of David is a collective grouping together of all David's future posterity, but only that this one branch of David shall possess the throne for ever, and not, like mortal men, for a series of years only; 2 Sam. vii. 16. צמח denotes the Messiah, and this title is formed from צמח יהוה, Isa. iv. 2 (see Del. on this passage). Nor does the mention of shepherds in the plural, ver. 4, at all oppose this. An untenable rendering of the sense is: first I will raise up unto you shepherds, then the Messiah; or: better shepherds, *inprimis unum, Messiam* (Ch. B. Mich.). The two promises are not so to be joined. First we have the raising up of good shepherds, in contrast to the evil shepherds that have destroyed the people; then the promise is further explained to the effect that these good shepherds shall be raised up to David in the

“righteous branch,” i.e. in the promised “seed” of his sons. The good shepherds are contrasted with the evil shepherds, but are then summed up in the person of the Messiah, as being comprised therein. The relation of the good shepherds to the righteous branch is not so, that the latter is the most pre-eminent of the former, but that in that one branch of David the people should have given to them all the good shepherds needed for their deliverance. The Messiah does not correspond to the series of David’s earthly posterity that sit upon his throne, in that He too, as second David, will also have a long series of descendants upon His throne; but in that His kingdom, His dominion, lasts for ever. In the parallel passage, xxxiii. 15, where the contrast to the evil shepherds is omitted, we therefore hear only of the one branch of David; so in Ezek. xxxiv., where only the *one* good shepherd, the servant of the Lord, David, stands in contrast to the evil shepherds (ver. 23). Hence neither must we seek the fulfilment of our prophecy in the elevation of the Maccabees, who were not even of the race of David, nor understand, as Grot., Zerubbabel to be the righteous branch, but the Messiah, as was rightly understood by the *Chald.* He is צִדִּיק in contrast to the then reigning members of the house of David, and as He who will do right and justice in His realm; cf. xxii. 15, where the same is said of Josiah as contrasted with his ungodly son Jehoiakim. מֶלֶךְ is subjoined to מֶלֶךְ to bespeak His rule as kingship in the fullest sense of the word. *Regnabit rex, i.e. magnifice regnabit, ut non tantum appareant aliquæ reliquæ pristinæ dignitatis, sed ut rex floreat et vigeat et obtineat perfectionem, qualis fuit sub Davide et Salomone ac multo præstantior* (Calv.). הַשְׂכִּיל, deal prudently, rule wisely, as in iii. 15, not: be fortunate, prosperous. Here the context demands the former rendering, the only one justified by usage, since the doing of right and justice is mentioned as the fruit and result of the הַשְׂכִּיל. These words, too, point back to David, of whom it is in 2 Sam. viii. 15 said, that he as king did right and justice to all his people.—Ver. 6 exhibits the welfare which the “branch” will, by His wise and just rule, secure for the people. Judah shall be blessed with welfare (בִּטְחָן), and Israel dwell safely; that blessing will come into fulfilment which Moses set before the people’s view in Deut. xxxiii. 28 f. יְהוּדָה as the

totality of the inhabitants is construed as feminine, as in iii. 7, xiv. 2, etc. *Israel* denotes the ten tribes. Under the just sceptre of the Messiah, all Israel will reach the destiny designed for it by the Lord, will, as God's people, attain to full dignity and glory.

This is the name by which they shall call Him, the branch of David: Jahveh our Righteousness. The suffix in יְהוֹשִׁיעַ refers to "righteous branch." Instead of the 3 *pers. sing.* יְהוֹשִׁיעַ with the suffix *i*, some *codd.* have the plur. יְהוֹשִׁיעִים. This some polemical authors, such as Raim., Martini, Galatin, hold to be the true reading; and they affirmed the other had proceeded from the Jews, with the design of explaining away the deity of the Messiah. The Jews translated, they said: This is the name whereby Jahveh will call him: Our Righteousness; which is indeed the rendering of R. Saad. Gaon *apud* Aben Ezra, and of Menasse ben Israel. But this rendering is rejected by most Jewish comm. as being at variance with the accents, so that the impugned reading could not well have been invented by the Jews for polemical purposes. יְהוֹשִׁיעַ is attested by most *codd.*, and is rendered by the LXX., so that the sense can be none other than: they will call the righteous branch of David "Jahveh our Righteousness." Most comm., including even Hitz., admit that the suffix refers to יְהוָה, the principal person in both verses. Only Ew., Graf., and Näg. seek to refer it to Israel, because in xxxiii. 16 the same name is given to Jerusalem. But the passage cited does not prove the case. To call any one by a name universally denotes in the prophetic usage: to set him forth as that which the name expresses; so here: the branch of David will manifest Himself to the people of Israel as Jahve Tsidkenu. This name is variously expounded. The older Christian comm. understand that the Messiah is here called Jehovah, and must therefore be true God, and that He is called our righteousness, inasmuch as He justifies us by His merit.¹

¹ Thus the *Vulg.* renders: *Dominus justus noster*; and even Calv. says: *Quicumque sine contentione et amarulentia judicant, facile vident, idem nomen competere in Christum, quatenus est Deus, sicuti nomen filii Davidis respectu humanæ naturæ ei tribuitur.—Omnibus æquis et moderatis hoc constabit, Christum hic insigniri duplici elogio, ut in eo nobis commendet propheta tam deitatis gloriam, quam veritatem humanæ naturæ; and by the righteousness he understands justification by the merits of Christ.*

But the rabbinical interpreters, headed by the Chald., take the name to be an abbreviation of a sentence; so *e.g.* Kimchi: *Israel vocabit Messiam hoc nomine, quia ejus temporibus Domini justitia nobis firma, jugis et non recedet.* They appeal to xxxiii. 17 and to other passages, such as Ex. xvii. 15, where Moses calls the altar "Jahveh my Banner," and Gen. xxxiii. 20, where Jacob gives to the altar built by him the name *El elohe Jisrael*. Hgstb. has rightly pronounced for this interpretation. The passages cited show how in such names an entire sentence is conveyed. "Jahveh my Banner" is as much as to say: This altar is dedicated to Jahveh my banner, or to the Almighty, the God of Israel. So all names compounded of *Jahveh*; *e.g.* *Jehoshua* = Jahveh salvation, brief for: he to whom Jahveh vouchsafes salvation. So *Tsidkijahu* = Jahveh's righteousness, for: he to whom Jahveh deals righteousness. To this corresponds *Jahveh Tsidkenu*: he by whom Jahveh deals righteousness. We are bound to take the name thus by the parallel passage, xxxiii. 16, where the same name is given to Jerusalem, to convey the thought, that by the Messiah the Lord will make Jerusalem the city of righteousness, will give His righteousness to it, will adorn and glorify it therewith.—צדקתִּי is not to be referred, as it is by the ancient Church comm., to justification through the forgiveness of sins. With this we have not here to do, but with personal righteousness, which consists in deliverance from all unrighteousness, and which is bound up with blessedness. Actual righteousness has indeed the forgiveness of sins for its foundation, and in this respect justification is not to be wholly excluded; but this latter is here subordinate to actual righteousness, which the Messiah secures for Israel by the righteousness of His reign. The unrighteousness of the former kings has brought Israel and Judah to corruption and ruin; the righteousness of the branch to be hereafter raised up to David will remove all the ruin and mischief from Judah, and procure for them the righteousness and blessedness which is of God.—"What Jeremiah," as is well remarked by Hgstb., "sums up in the name Jehovah Tsidkenu, Ezekiel expands at length in the parallel xxxiv. 25-31: the Lord concludes with them a covenant of peace; rich blessings fall to their lot; He breaks their yoke, frees them from bondage; they do not become

the heathen's prey." These divine blessings are also to be conferred upon the people by means of the righteous branch. What the ancient Church comm. found in the *name* was true as to the *substance*. For as no man is perfectly righteous, so no mere earthly king can impart to the people the righteousness of Jahveh in the full sense of the term; only He who is endowed with the righteousness of God. In so far the Godhead of this King is contained *implicite* in the name; only we must not understand that he that bore the name is called Jahveh. But that righteousness, as the sum of all blessing, is set before the people's view, we may gather from the context, especially from vers. 7 and 8, where it is said that the blessings to be conferred will outshine all former manifestations of God's grace. This is the sense of both verses, which, save in the matter of a trifling change in ver. 8, are verbally repeated from xvi. 14 and 15, where they have already been expounded.¹

Chap. xxiii. 9-40. AGAINST THE FALSE PROPHETS.—Next to the kings, the pseudo-prophets, who flattered the people's

¹ The LXX. have omitted both these verses here, and have placed them at the end of the chapter, after ver. 40; but by their contents they do not at all belong to that, whereas after ver. 6 they are very much in place, as even Hitz. admits. In the text of the LXX. handed down, ver. 6 ends with the words: 'Ιωσεδέκ ἐν τοῖς προφήταις; and 'Ιωσεδέκ may be said to correspond to יהוה צדקנו, and ἐν τοῖς προφήταις to לַנְבִיאִים, ver. 9. Hitz. and Gr. therefore infer that vers. 7 and 8 were wanting also in the Heb. text used by the translator, and that they must have been added by way of supplement, most probably from another MS. This inference is thought to find support in the assumption that, because the Greek mss. have no point between 'Ιωσεδέκ and ἐν τοῖς προφήταις, therefore the Alexandrian translator must have joined these words together so as to make one—meaningless—sentence. A thoroughly uncritical conclusion, which could be defended only if the Alex. translators had punctuated their Greek text as we have it punctuated in our printed editions. And if a later reader of the LXX. had added the verses from the Hebrew text, then he would certainly have intercalated them at the spot where they stood in the original, *i.e.* between ver. 6 and ver. 9. Their displacement to a position after ver. 40 is to be explained from the fact that in chap. xvi. 14 and 15 they immediately follow a threatening; and is manifestly the work of the translator himself, who omitted them after ver. 6, understanding them as of threatening import, because a threatening seemed to him to be out of place after ver. 6.

carnal longings, have done most to contribute to the fall of the realm. Therefore Jeremiah passes directly from his discourse against the wicked kings to rebuking the false prophets; and if we may presume from the main substance, the latter discourse belongs to the same time as the former. It begins

Vers. 9-15. *With a description of the pernicious practices of these persons.*—Ver. 9. “Concerning the prophets. Broken is mine heart within me; all my bones totter. I am become like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine hath overcome, because of Jahveh and because of His holy words. Ver. 10. For of adulterers the land is full, for because of the curse the land withereth, the pastures of the wilderness dry up; and their course is become evil, and their strength not right. Ver. 11. For both prophet and priest are profane; yea, in mine house found I their wickedness, saith Jahveh. Ver. 12. Therefore their way shall be to them as slippery places in darkness, they shall be thrown down and fall therein; for I bring evil upon them, the year of their visitation, saith Jahveh. Ver. 13. In the prophets of Samaria saw I folly; they prophesied in the name of Baal, and led my people Israel astray. Ver. 14. But in the prophets of Jerusalem saw I an horrible thing, committing adultery and walking in falsehood, and they strengthen the hands of the wicked, that none returneth from his wickedness. They are all become to me as Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah. Ver. 15. Therefore thus saith Jahveh of hosts concerning the prophets: Behold, I feed them with wormwood, and give them to drink water of bitterness; for from the prophets of Jerusalem is profaneness gone forth over all the land.”

“Concerning the prophets” is the heading, as in xlvi. 2, xlviii. 1, xlix. 1, 7, 23, 28; and corresponds to the woe uttered against the wicked shepherds, ver. 1. It refers to the entire portion vers. 9-40, which is thus distinguished from the oracles concerning the kings, chap. xxi. and xxii. It might indeed be joined, according to the accents, with what follows: because of the prophets is my heart broken; but as the cause of Jeremiah’s deep agitation is given at the end of the second half-verse: because of Jahveh, etc., it is not likely the seer would in one sentence have given two different and quite separate reasons.

The brokenness of his heart denotes the profoundest inward emotion; yet not despondency by reason of sin and misery, like "a broken heart" in Ps. xxxiv. 19, li. 19, etc., but because of God's wrath at the impious lives of the pseudo-prophets. This has overcome him, and this he must publish. This wrath had broken his heart and seized on all his bones, so that they nervelessly tremble, and he resembles a drunken man who can no longer stand firm on his feet. He feels himself inwardly quite downcast; he not only feels the horrors of the judgment that is to befall the false prophets and corrupt priests who lead the people astray, but knows well the dreadful sufferings the people too will have to endure. The verb חָנַן occurs only twice in the Piel besides in the present passage; in Gen. i. 2, of the Spirit of God that in the beginning of creation brooded over the waters of the earth, and Deut. xxxii. 11, of the eagle that flutters over her young,—in Arabic خف, to be soft. The root meaning of the word is doubtless: to be flaccid; here accordingly, to totter, to sway to and fro. "Because of Jahveh" is more fully explained by "because of the words of His holiness," i.e. the words which God as holy has made known to him regarding the unholy ongoings of the pseudo-prophets.—From ver. 10 onwards come the sayings of God which have so terribly agitated the prophet. The land is full of adulterers. Adultery in the literal sense is mentioned by way of example, as a reckless transgression of God's commands, then much in vogue, whereby the moral foundations of the kingdom were broken up. In ver. 14 the prophets are said to commit adultery and walk in lying, cf. xxix. 23 and v. 7. By reason of this vice a curse lies on the land, under which it is withering away. The clause "for because of the curse," etc., is not to be taken as parenthesis (Näg.), but as co-ordinate with the previous clause, giving the second, or rather the chief ground, why Jeremiah is so deeply distressed. The reason of this is not so much the prevailing moral corruption, as the curse lying on the land because of the moral corruption of its inhabitants. אָלַף is not perjury (Chald., Rashi, Kimchi), but the curse wherewith God punishes the transgression of His covenant laws, cf. xi. 3, 8, Deut. xxviii. 15 ff., xxix. 19 ff. The words are modelled after

Isa. xxiv. 4 ff.; and הָאָרֶץ is not the population, but the land itself, which suffers under God's curse, and which is visited with drought; cf. xii. 4. The next words point to drought. נָאוֹת מִדְבָּר as in ix. 9. By וַיִּהְיֶה the further description of the people's depravity is attached to the first clause of the verse. Their course is become evil; their running or racing, *i.e.* the aim and endeavour of the ungodly. The suffix on this word מְרֻצָּתָם refers not to "adulterers," but *ad sensum* to the inhabitants of the land. Their strength is not-right, *i.e.* they are strong, valiant in wrong; cf. ix. 2. For—so goes ver. 11—both prophets and priests, who should lead the people in the right way, are profane, and desecrate by their wickedness even the house of God, presumably by idolatry; cf. xxxii. 34. There is no reason for thinking here, as Hitz. does, of adultery practised in the temple.—Ver. 12. For this the Lord will punish them. Their way shall be to them as slippery places in darkness. This threatening is after the manner of Ps. xxxv. 6, where הִשָּׁה חֲלָלִים are joined, changed by Jeremiah to the words in the text. The passage cited shows that we may not separate בְּאֶפְלָה from חֲלָלִים , as Ew. does, to join it to the following יִדְחוּ . Their way shall resemble slippery places in the dark, when one may readily slip and fall. Besides, they are to be thrust, pushed, so that they must fall on the slippery path (יִדְחוּ from $\text{דָּחָה} = \text{דָּחָה}$, Ps. xxxv. 5; "therein" to be referred to "their way"). The clause: "for I bring evil," etc., is formed after xi. 23.—Ver. 13 f. To display the vileness of the prophets, these are parallelized with the prophets of Samaria. The latter did foolishly (הַפְלִיָּה , prop. of that which is unsalted, insipid, Job vi. 6, hence irrational, *insulsum*), since they prophesied, being inspired by Baal the no-god, and by such prophesying led the people into error; cf. 1 Kings xviii. 19 ff. Much more horrible is the conduct of the prophets of Jerusalem, who commit adultery, walk in lying, and strengthen the wicked in their wickedness, not merely by their delusive pretences (cf. ver. 17, vi. 14, xiv. 13), but also by their immoral lives, so that no one turns from his wickedness, cf. Ezek. xiii. 22. לְבִלְתִּי is here and in xxvii. 18, as in Ex. xx. 20, construed, contrary to the usage everywhere else, not with the *infin.*, but with the *verb. fin.* As the prophets, instead of converting the wicked, only confirmed them in their

sins, therefore all the inhabitants of Judah or Jerusalem are become as corrupt as Sodom and Gomorrah. "They all" are not the prophets, but the inhabitants of Judah or Jerusalem; and "the inhabitants thereof" are those of the capital, cf. Deut. xxxii. 32, Isa. i. 10. On the seducers the Lord will therefore inflict punishment, because impiousness has gone forth from them over the whole land. With the punishment threatened in ver. 15, cf. ix. 14.

Vers. 16-22. *Warning against the lying prophecies of the prophets.*—Ver. 16. "Thus saith Jahveh of hosts: Harken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you! They deceive you; a vision of their heart they speak, not out of the mouth of Jahveh. Ver. 17. They say still unto my despisers: 'Jahveh hath spoken: Peace shall ye have;' and unto every one that walketh in the stubbornness of his heart they say: 'There shall no evil come upon you.' Ver. 18. For who hath stood in Jahveh's counsel, that he might have seen and heard His word? who hath marked my word and heard it? Ver. 19. Behold a tempest from Jahveh, fury goeth forth, and eddying whirlwind shall hurl itself upon the head of the wicked. Ver. 20. The anger of God shall not turn till He have done and till He have performed the thoughts of His heart. At the end of the days shall ye be well aware of this. Ver. 21. I have not sent the prophets, yet they ran; I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied. Ver. 22. But if they had stood in my counsel, they would publish my words to my people and bring them back from their evil way and from the evil of their doings."

The warning against these prophets is founded in ver. 16 on the fact that they give out the thoughts of their own hearts to be divine revelation, and promise peace and prosperity to all stiff-necked sinners. מַהֲבִלִים, lit. they make you vain, *i.e.* make you to yield yourselves to vain delusion, seduce you to false confidence. This they do by their speaking visions, *i.e.* revelations of their heart, not what God has spoken, revealed to them. As an illustration of this, ver. 17 tells that they prophesy continued peace or well-being to the despisers of God. The *infin. abs.* אַמֹּר after the *verb. fin.* intimates the duration or repetition of the thing. דְּבַר יְהוָה are words of the false prophets, with which they give out that their prophesyings are God's word.

Since we nowhere else find sayings of Jahveh introduced by יהוה דבר, but usually by בַּה אָמַר י', the LXX. have taken offence at that formula, and, reading דְּבַר, join the words with לְמַנְאֲצִי: τοῖς ἀπωθουμένοις τὸν λόγον κυρίου. To this reading Hitz. and Gr. give the preference over the Masoretic; but they have not noticed that they thus get an unsuitable sense. For דְּבַר יהוה in prophetic language never denotes the Mosaic law or the "moral law" (Hitz.), but the word of God published by the prophets. By their view of "word of Jahveh" they would here obtain the self-inconsistent thought: to the despisers of divine revelation they proclaim as revelation. The Masoretic reading is clearly right; and Jeremiah chose the unusual introductory formula to distinguish the language of the pseudo-prophets from that of the true prophets of the Lord. וְכָל-הָאֱלֹהִים ב' is prefixed absolutely: and as concerning every one that walks . . . they say, for: and to every one . . . they say. On the "stubbornness of their heart," see on iii. 17. With the speech of the false prophets, cf. xiv. 13 and vi. 14.—In ver. 18 a more comprehensive reason is given to show that these prophets are not publishing God's decrees. The question: Who hath stood? has negative force = None hath stood. By this Jeremiah does not deny the possibility of this universally, but only of the false prophets (Hitz.). This limitation of the words is suggested by the context. To the true prophets the Lord reveals His סֹדֵר, Amos iii. 7. וַיֵּרָא וַיִּשְׁמַע are not to be taken jussively: let him see and hear (Hitz.), for the foregoing interrogation is not a conditional clause introducing a command. The imperfects with ו are clauses of consequence or design, and after a preceding perfect should be rendered in English by the conditional of the pluperfect. Seeing the word of God refers to prophetic vision. The second question is appended without at all conveying any inference from what precedes; and in it the second verb (with ו consec.) is simply a strengthening of the first: who hath hearkened to my word and heard it? The Masoretes have quite unnecessarily changed the *Chet*. דְּבַר י' into דְּבָרָיו. In the graphic representation of the prophets, the transition to the direct speech of God, and conversely, is no unusual thing. The change of וַיִּשְׁמַע into וַיִּשְׁמַע, unnecessary and even improper as it is, is preferred by Graf and Näg., inasmuch as they take the interrogative מִי

in both clauses in the sense of *quisquis* and understand the verse thus: He who has but stood in the counsel of the Lord, let him see and hear His word (*i.e.* he must see and hear His word); and he that hath marked my word, let him publish it (*i.e.* he must publish it). This exposition becomes only then necessary, if we leave the context out of view and regard the question as being to the effect that no one has stood in God's counsel—which Jeremiah could not mean. Not to speak of the change of the text necessary for carrying it through, this view does not even give a suitable sense. If the clause: He that has stood in the counsel of the Lord, he must proclaim His word, is to be regarded as having a demonstrative force, then the principal idea must be supplied, thus namely: "and it is impossible that it should be favourable to those who despise it." In ver. 19 Jeremiah publishes a real word of the Lord, which sounds very differently from the words of the false prophets. A tempest from Jahveh will burst over the heads of the evil-doers, and the wrath of God will not cease until it has accomplished the divine decree. "A tempest from Jahveh" is defined by "fury" in apposition as being a manifestation of God's wrath; and the whole first clause is further expanded in the second part of the verse. The tempest from Jahveh goes forth, *i.e.* breaks out, and as whirling tornado or eddying whirlwind bursts over the head of the wicked. יָהוֹה is to be taken in accordance with מַתְחִילָה: twist, whirl, cf. 2 Sam. iii. 29. "The thoughts of His heart" must not be limited to what God has decreed *de interitu populi* (Calv.); it comprehends God's whole redemptive plan in His people's regard—not merely the overthrow of the kingdom of Judah, but also the purification of the people by means of judgments and the final glorification of His kingdom. To this future the next clause points: at the end of the days ye shall have clear knowledge of this. "The end of the days" is not merely the completion of the period in which we now are (Hitz., Gr., Näg., etc.), but, as universally, the end of the times, *i.e.* the Messianic future, the last period of the world's history which opens at the close of the present æon; see on Gen. xlix. 1, Num. xxiv. 14, etc. הַתְּבוּנָה is strengthened by בִּינָה: attain to insight, come to clearer knowledge.—Ver. 21 f. From the word of the Lord proclaimed in

ver. 19 f. it appears that the prophets who prophesy peace or well-being to the despisers of God are not sent and inspired by God. If they had stood in the counsel of God, and so had truly learnt God's word, they must have published it and turned the people from its evil way. This completely proves the statement of ver. 16, that the preachers of peace deceive the people. Then follows—

Vers. 23-32, in continuation, an intimation *that God knows and will punish the lying practices of these prophets.*—Ver. 23. “Am I then a God near at hand, saith Jahveh, and not a God afar off? Ver. 24. Or can any hide himself in secret, that I cannot see him? saith Jahveh. Do not I fill the heaven and the earth? saith Jahveh. Ver. 25. I have heard what the prophets say, that prophesy falsehood in my name, saying: I have dreamed, I have dreamed. Ver. 26. How long? Have they it in their mind, the prophets that prophesy falsehood in my name, and the prophets of the deceit of their heart, Ver. 27. Do they think to make my people forget my name by their dreams which they tell one to the other, as their fathers forgot my name by Baal? Ver. 28. The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word in truth. What is the straw to the corn? saith Jahveh. Ver. 29. Is not thus my word—as fire, saith Jahveh, and as a hammer that dasheth the rock in pieces? Ver. 30. Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets that steal my words one from the other. Ver. 31. Behold, I am against the prophets, saith Jahveh, that take their tongues and say: God's word. Ver. 32. Behold, I am against the prophets that prophesy lying dreams, saith Jahveh, and tell them, and lead my people astray with their lies and their boasting, whom yet I have not sent nor commanded them, and they bring no good to this people, saith Jahveh.”

The force of the question: Am I a God at hand, not afar off? is seen from what follows. Far and near are here in their local, not their temporal signification. A God near at hand is one whose domain and whose knowledge do not extend far; a God afar off, one who sees and works into the far distance. The question, which has an affirmative force, is explained by the statement of ver. 24: I fill heaven and earth. Hitz. insists on

understanding "near at hand" of temporal nearness, after Deut. xxxii. 17: a God who is not far hence, a newly appeared God; and he supposes that, since in the east, from of old, knowledge is that which is known by experience, therefore the greatness of one's knowledge depends on one's advancement in years (Job xv. 7, 10, xii. 12, etc.); and God, he says, is the Ancient of days, Dan. vii. 9. But this line of thought is wholly foreign to the present passage. It is not wealth of knowledge as the result of long life or old age that God claims for Himself in ver. 24, but the power of seeing into that which is hidden so that none can conceal himself from Him, or omniscience. The design with which God here dwells on His omniscience and omnipresence too (cf. 1 Kings viii. 27, Isa. lxvi. 1) is shown in ver. 25. The false prophets went so far with their lying predictions, that it might appear as if God did not hear or see their words and deeds. The Lord exposes this delusion by calling His omniscience to mind in the words: I have heard how they prophesy falsehood in my name and say, I have dreamed, *i.e.* a dream sent by God, have had a revelation in dreams, whereas according to ver. 26 the dream was the deceit of their heart—"spun out of their own heart" (Hitz.). Ver. 26 is variously interpreted. Hitz. supposes that the interrogative מָה (in מָה־מָה) is made subordinate in the clause, and that the question is expressed with a double interrogative. He translates: How long still is there anything left in the heart of the prophets? as much as to say: how long have they materials for this? But there is a total want of illustrations in point for this subordination and doubling of the interrogative; and the force given to the מָה is quite arbitrary, since we should have had some intimation of what it was that was present in their hearts. Even then the repetition of the interrogative particles is unexplained, and the connecting of מָה with a participle, instead of with the infinitive with לֵךְ, cannot be defended by means of passages where לֵךְ is joined with an adjective and the idea "to be" has to be supplied. L. de Dieu, followed by Seb. Schmidt, Ch. B. Mich., Ros., Maur., Umbr., Graf, was right in taking "How long" by itself as an aposiopesis: how long, *sc.* shall this go on? and in beginning a new question with מָה־מָה, a question continued and completed by the

further question: "Do they think," etc., ver. 27. Is it in the heart of the prophets, *i.e.* have the prophets a mind to prophesy falsehood? do they mean to make men forget my name? Against holding ver. 27 as a resumption of the question there is no well-founded objection. Næg. affirms that after הִשְׁכַּחְנוּ we must in that case have here הֵן as recapitulation of the subject; but that is rendered unnecessary by the subject's being contained in the immediately preceding words. The conjecture propounded by Næg., to change הֵן into הֵאָחֵז: how long still is the fire in the heart of the prophets? needs no refutation. To make to forget the name of the Lord is: so to banish the Lord, as seen in His government and works, from the people's heart, that He is no longer feared and honoured. By their dreams which they relate one to the other, *i.e.* not one prophet to the other, but the prophet to his fellow-man amongst the people. בְּבַעַל, because of the Baal, whom their fathers made their god, cf. Judg. iii. 7, 1 Sam. xii. 9 f.—These lies the prophets ought to cease. Ver. 28. Each is to speak what he has, what is given him. He that has a dream is to tell the dream, and he that has God's word should tell it. Dream as opposed to word of the Lord is an ordinary dream, the fiction of one's own heart; not a dream-revelation given by God, which the pseudo-prophets represented their dreams to be. These dreams are as different from God's word as straw is from corn. This clause is supported, ver. 29, by a statement of the nature of God's word. It is thus (כֵּן), namely, as fire and as a hammer that smashes the rocks. The sense of these words is not this: the word of God is strong enough by itself, needs no human addition, or: it will burn as fire the straw of the man's word mixed with it. There is here no question of the mixing of God's word with man's word. The false prophets did not mingle the two, but gave out their man's word for God's. Nor, by laying stress on the indwelling power of the word of God, does Jeremiah merely give his hearers a characteristic by which they may distinguish genuine prophecy; he seeks besides to make them know that the word of the Lord which he proclaims will make an end of the lying prophets' work. Thus understood, ver. 29 forms a stepping-stone to the threatenings uttered in vers. 30-32 against the lying prophets. The comparison to fire does not refer to

LXX. translation : *ὁμεῖς ἐστὲ τὸ λῆμμα*, or Vulg. : *vos estis onus*, as Cappell., J. D. Mich., Hitz., Gr., etc., do. The LXX. rendering is based, not on another reading, but on another division of the words, viz. **אָתָם הַמִּשָּׂא**.—In ver. 34 the meaning of this answer is more fully explained. On every one that uses the word “burden” in this sneering way God will avenge the sneer, and not only on his person, but on his house, his family as well. In ver. 35 they are told how they are to speak of prophecy. Ver. 36. They are no longer to make use of the phrase “burden of Jahveh,” “for the burden shall his word be to each one,” i.e. the word “burden” will be to each who uses it a burden that crushes him down. “And ye wrest,” etc., is part of the reason for what is said : *and ye have* = *for ye have wrested the words of the living God*. The clause is properly a corollary which tells what happens when they use the forbidden word.—Vers. 38–40. In case they, in spite of the prohibition, persist in the use of the forbidden word, i.e. do not cease their mockery of God’s word, then the punishment set forth in ver. 33 is certainly to come on them. In the threat **נִשְׂאֵי אֶתְכֶם נִשָּׂא** there is a manifestly designed word-play on **מִשָּׂא**. LXX., Vulg., Syr. have therefore rendered as if from **נִשְׂאֵי נִשָּׂא** (or **נִשְׂאֵי**) instead : *ἐγὼ λαμβάνω, ego tollam vos portans*. One cod. gives **נִשָּׂא**, and Ew., Hitz., Graf, Näg., etc., hold this reading to be right; but hardly with justice. The Chald. has expressed the reading of the text in its **אַרְטוּשׁ יִתְּבוֹן מְרִטֶשׁ**, *et relinquam vos relinquendo*. And the form **נִשְׂאֵי** is explained only by reading **נִשָּׂא** (נִשָּׂא); not by **נִשְׂאֵי**, for this verb keeps its **נ** everywhere, save with the one exception of **נִשְׂאֵי**, Ps. xxxii. 1, formed after the parallel **בָּסִי**. The assertion that the reading in the text gives no good sense is unfounded. I will utterly forget you is much more in keeping than : I will utterly lift you up, carry you forth.—With ver. 40, cf. xx. 11.

Chap. xxiv. THE TWO FIG BASKETS—an emblem of the future of Judah’s people.—Ver. 1. “Jahveh caused me to see, and behold two baskets of figs set before the temple of Jahveh, after Nebuchadrezzar had carried captive Jeconiah, the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and the princes of Judah, and the work-people and the smiths from Jerusalem, and had brought

them to Babylon. Ver. 2. One basket had very good figs like the early figs, the other basket very bad figs, which could not be eaten for badness. Ver. 3. And Jahveh said to me: What seest thou, Jeremiah? and I said: Figs; the good figs are very good, and the bad figs very bad, which cannot be eaten for badness. Ver. 4. Then came the word of Jahveh unto me, saying: Ver. 5. Thus saith Jahveh, the God of Israel: Like these good figs, so will I look on the captives of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans, for good; Ver. 6. And I will set mine eye upon them for good, and will bring them back again to this land, and build them and not pull down, and plant them and not pluck up. Ver. 7. And I give them an heart to know me, that I am Jahveh; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God; for they will return unto me with their whole heart. Ver. 8. And as the bad figs, which cannot be eaten for badness, yea thus saith Jahveh, so will I make Zedekiah the king of Judah, and his princes and the residue of Jerusalem, them that are left remaining in this land and them that dwell in Egypt. Ver. 9. I give them up for ill-usage, for trouble to all kingdoms of the earth, for a reproach and a by-word, for a taunt and for a curse in all the places whither I shall drive them. Ver. 10. And I send among them the sword, the famine, and the plague, till they be consumed from off the land that I gave to them and to their fathers."

This vision resembles in form and substance that in Amos viii. 1-3. The words: Jahveh caused me to see, point to an inward event, a seeing with the eyes of the spirit, not of the body. The time is, ver. 1, precisely given: after Nebuchadnezzar had carried to Babylon King Jeconiah, with the princes and a part of the people; apparently soon after this deportation, at the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah, the king set up by Nebuchadnezzar over Judah. Cf. 2 Kings xxiv. 14-17.—The Lord caused the prophet to see in spirit two baskets of figs (יִצְרִים, from יָצַר, equivalent to רוּר, ver. 2), (מוֹעֲדִים) (from מוֹעֵד) in the place appointed therefor (מוֹעֵד) before the temple. We are not to regard these figs as an offering brought to Jahveh (Graf); and so neither are we to think here of the place where first-fruits or tithes were offered to the Lord, Ex. xxiii. 19 f., Deut. xxvi. 2. The two baskets of figs have nothing to do with

first-fruits. They symbolize the people, those who appear before the Lord their God, namely, before the altar of burnt-offering; where the Lord desired to appear to, to meet with His people (נִצֵּר, Ex. xxix. 42 f.), so as to sanctify it by His glory, Ex. xxix. 43. מִנְעָרִים therefore means: placed in the spot appointed by the Lord for His meeting with Israel.—Ver. 2. “The one basket very good figs” is short for: the basket was quite full of very good figs; cf. Friedr. W. M. Philippi, *on the Nature and Origin of the Status constr. in Hebrew* (1871), p. 93. The comparison to early figs serves simply to heighten the idea of very good; for the first figs, those ripened at the end of June, before the fruit season in August, were highly prized dainties. Cf. Isa. xxviii. 4, Hos. ix. 10.—Ver. 3. The question: what seest thou? serves merely to give the object seen greater prominence, and does not imply the possibility of seeing wrong (Näg.).—Ver. 4 ff. The interpretation of the symbol. Ver. 5. Like the good figs, the Lord will look on the captives in Chaldea for good (“for good” belongs to the verb “look on them”). The point of resemblance is: as one looks with pleasure on good figs, takes them and keeps them, so will I bestow my favour on Judah’s captives. Looking on them for good is explained, ver. 6: the Lord will set His eye on them, bring them back into their land and build them up again. With “build them,” etc., cf. i. 10. The building and planting of the captives is not to consist solely in the restoration of their former civil well-being, but will be a spiritual regeneration of the people. God will give them a heart to know Him as their God, so that they may be in truth His people, and He their God. “For they will return,” not: when they return (Ew., Hitz.). The turning to the Lord cannot be regarded as the condition of their receiving favour, because God will give them a heart to know Him; it is the working of the knowledge of the Lord put in their hearts. And this is adduced to certify the idea that they will then be really the Lord’s people.—Vers. 8–10. And as one deals with the bad uneatable figs, *i.e.* throws them away, so will the Lord deliver up to ignominious ruin Zedekiah with his princes and the remainder of the people, both those still staying in the land and those living in Egypt. This, the fate awaiting them, is more

fully described in vers. 9 and 10. In ver. 8 the "yea, thus saith," is inserted into the sentence by way of repetition of the "thus saith," ver. 5. כִּן אָמַר is resumed and expanded by וַיִּנְתְּחִים in ver. 9. The "princes" are Zedekiah's courtiers. Those in Egypt are they who during the war had fled thither to hide themselves from judgment. From the beginning of ver. 9 to הָאָרֶץ is verbally the same as xv. 4, save that לְרָעָה is added to make more marked the contrast to לְטוֹבָה , ver. 5—the evil, namely, that is done to them. Hitz., Ew., Umbr., Gr., following the LXX., delete this word, but without due cause. The further description of the ill-usage in "for a reproach," etc., is based on Deut. xxviii. 37; and is intensified by the addition of "and for an object of cursing," to show that in their case the curse there recorded will be fulfilled. From the last words, according to which disgrace will light on them in all the lands they are driven into, it appears that captivity will fall to the lot of such as are yet to be found in the land. But captivity involves new hostile invasions, and a repeated siege and capture of Jerusalem; during which many will perish by sword, famine, and plague. Thus and by deportation they shall be utterly rooted out of the land of their fathers. Cf. xxix. 17 ff., where Jeremiah repeats the main idea of this threatening.

Chap. xxv. *The Judgment on Judah and all Nations.*

The prediction of this chapter is introduced by a full heading, which details with sufficient precision the time of its composition. Ver. 1. "The word that came (befell) to $(\text{עַל}$ for אֵל) Jeremiah concerning the whole people of Judah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, that is, the first year of Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon; Ver. 2. Which Jeremiah the prophet spake to the whole people of Judah and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying."—All the discourses of Jeremiah delivered before this time contain either no dates at all, or only very general ones, such as iii. 6: In the days of Josiah, or: at the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim (xxvi. 1). And it is only some of those of the following period that are so completely dated, as xxviii. 1, xxxii. 1, xxxvi. 1, xxxix. 1, etc. The present heading is in this further

respect peculiar, that besides the year of the king of Judah's reign, we are also told that of the king of Babylon. This is suggested by the contents of this prediction, in which the people are told of the near approach of the judgment which Nebuchadnezzar is to execute on Judah and on all the surrounding nations far and near, until after seventy years judgment fall on Babylon itself. The fourth year of Jehoiakim is accordingly a notable turning-point for the kingdom of Judah. It is called the first year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, because then, at the command of his old and decrepit father Nabopolassar, Nebuchadnezzar had undertaken the conduct of the war against Pharaoh Necho of Egypt, who had penetrated as far as the Euphrates. At Carchemish he defeated Necho (xlvi. 2), and in the same year he came in pursuit of the fleeing Egyptians to Judah, took Jerusalem, and made King Jehoiakim tributary. With the first taking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, *i.e.* in 606 B.C., begins the seventy years' Babylonian bondage or exile of Judah, foretold by Jeremiah in ver. 11 of the present chapter. Nebuchadnezzar was then only commander of his father's armies; but he is here, and in 2 Kings xxiv. 1, Dan. i. 1, called king of Babylon, because, equipped with kingly authority, he dictated to the Jews, and treated them as if he had been really king. Not till the following year, when he was at the head of his army in Farther Asia, did his father Nabopolassar die; whereupon he hastened to Babylon to mount the throne; see on Dan. i. 1 and 1 Kings xxiv. 1.—In ver. 2 it is again specified that Jeremiah spoke the word of that Lord that came to him to the whole people and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem (לְכָל for לְכָל again). There is no cogent reason for doubting, as Graf does, the correctness of these dates. Chap. xxxvi. 5 tells us that Jeremiah in the same year caused Baruch to write down the prophecies he had hitherto delivered, in order to read them to the people assembled in the temple, and this because he himself was imprisoned; but it does not follow from this, that at the time of receiving this prophecy he was prevented from going into the temple. The occurrence of chap. xxxvi. falls in any case into a later time of Jehoiakim's fourth year than the present chapter. Ew., too, finds it very probable that the discourse of this chapter was, in

substance at least, publicly delivered. The contents of it tell strongly in favour of this view.

It falls into three parts. In the first, vers. 3-11, the people of Judah are told that he (Jeremiah) has for twenty-three years long unceasingly preached the word of the Lord to the people with a view to their repentance, without Judah's having paid any heed to his sayings, or to the exhortations of the other prophets, so that now all the kings of the north, headed by Nebuchadnezzar, will come against Judah and the surrounding nations, will plunder everything, and make these lands tributary to the king of Babylon; and then, vers. 12-14, that after seventy years judgment will come on the king of Babylon and his land. In the second part, vers. 15-29, Jeremiah receives the cup of the Lord's wrath, to give it to all the people to drink, beginning with Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, proceeding to the Egyptians and the nationalities in the west and east as far as Elam and Media, and concluding with the king of Babylon. Then in the third part, vers. 30-38, judgment to come upon all peoples is set forth in plain statement.—The first part of this discourse would have failed of its effect if Jeremiah had only composed it in writing, and had not delivered it publicly before the people, in its main substance at least. And the two other parts are so closely bound up with the first, that they cannot be separated from it. The judgment made to pass on Judah by Nebuchadnezzar is only the beginning of the judgment which is to pass on one nation after another, until it culminates in judgment upon the whole world. As to the import of the judgment of the Babylonian exile, cf. the remm. in the Comm. on Daniel, Introd. § 2. The announcement of the judgment, whose beginning was now at hand, was of the highest importance for Judah. Even the proclamations concerning the other peoples were designed to take effect in the first instance on the covenant people, that so they might learn to fear the Lord their God as the Lord of the whole world and as the Ruler of all the peoples, who by judgment is preparing the way for and advancing the salvation of the whole world. The ungodly were, by the warning of what was to come on all flesh, to be terrified out of their security and led to turn to God; while by a knowledge beforehand of the coming affliction and the time it was

appointed to endure, the God-fearing would be strengthened with confidence in the power and grace of the Lord, so that they might bear calamity with patience and self-devotion as a chastisement necessary to their well-being, without taking false views of God's covenant promises or being overwhelmed by their distresses.

Vers. 3-11. *The seventy years' Chaldean bondage of Judah and the peoples.*—Ver. 3. "From the thirteenth year of Josiah, son of Amon king of Judah, unto this day, these three and twenty years, came the word of Jahveh to me, and I spake to you, from early morn onwards speaking, but ye hearkened not. Ver. 4. And Jahveh sent to you all His servants, the prophets, from early morning on sending them, but ye hearkened not, and inclined not your ear to hear. Ver. 5. They said: Turn ye now each from his evil way and from the evil of your doings, so shall ye abide in the land which Jahveh hath given to your fathers from everlasting to everlasting. Ver. 6. And go not after other gods, to serve them and to worship them, that ye provoke me not with the work of your hands, and that I do you no evil. Ver. 7. But ye hearkened not to me, to provoke me by the work of your hands, to your own hurt. Ver. 8. Therefore thus hath said Jahveh of hosts: Because ye have not heard my words, Ver. 9. Behold, I send and take all the families of the north, saith Jahveh, and to Nebuchadrezzar my servant (I send), and bring them upon this land, and upon its inhabitants, and upon all these peoples round about, and ban them, and make them an astonishment and a derision and everlasting desolations, Ver. 10. And destroy from among them the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the mill and the light of the lamp. Ver. 11. And this land shall become a desert, a desolation, and these peoples shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years."

The very beginning of this discourse points to the great crisis in the fortunes of Judah. Jeremiah recalls into the memory of the people not merely the whole time of his own labours hitherto, but also the labours of many other prophets, who, like himself, have unremittingly preached repentance to the people, called on them to forsake idolatry and their evil ways, and to return to the God of their fathers—but in vain (vers. 3-7).

The 23 years, from the 13th of Josiah till the 4th of Jehoiakim, are thus made up: 19 years of Josiah and 4 years of Jehoiakim, including the 3 months' reign of Jehoahaz. The form אֲשַׁבֵּיִם might be an Aramaism; but it is more probably a clerical error, since we have אֲשַׁבֵּם everywhere else; cf. ver. 4, vii. 13, xxxv. 14, etc., and Olsh. *Gramm.* § 191, *g*. For syntactical reasons it cannot be 1st pers. *imperf.*, as Hitz. thinks it is. On the significance of this *infin. abs.* see on vii. 13. As to the thought of ver. 4 cf. vii. 25 f. and xi. 7 ff. לְאמֹר introduces the contents of the discourses of Jeremiah and the other prophets, though formally it is connected with וְיָשְׁלַח, ver. 4. As to the fact, cf. xxxv. 15. וְיָשְׁבוּ, so shall ye dwell, cf. vii. 7.—With ver. 6 cf. vii. 6, i. 16, etc. (אָרַע, *imperf. Hiph.* from רָעַע). הִכְעֵסוּנִי cannot be the reading of its *Chet.*, for the 3d person will not do. The י seems to have found its way in by an error in writing and the *Keri* to be the proper reading, since לְמַעַן is construed with the infinitive.—Ver. 8. For this obstinate resistance the Lord will cause the nations of the north, under Nebuchadrezzar's leadership, to come and lay Judah waste. "All the families of the north" points back to all the tribes of the kingdoms of the north, i. 14. וְיֵאָל נָבוֹכ' cannot be joined with "and take," but must depend from שְׁלַח in such a way that that verb is again repeated in thought. Ew. proposes to read וְיֵאָת according to some *codd.*, especially as Syr., Chald., Vulg. have rendered by an accusative. Against this Graf has justly objected, that then Nebuchadnezzar would be merely mentioned by the way as in addition to the various races, whereas it is he that brings these races and is the instrument of destruction in God's hand. Ew.'s reading is therefore to be unhesitatingly rejected. No valid reason appears for pronouncing the words: and to Nebuchadrezzar . . . my servant, to be a later interpolation (Hitz., Gr.) because they are not in the LXX. There is prominence given to Nebuchadnezzar by the very change of the construction, another "send" requiring to be repeated before "to Nebuchadrezzar." God calls Nebuchadnezzar His servant, as the executor of His will on Judah, cf. xxvii. 6 and xliii. 10. The "them" in "and bring them" refers to Nebuchadnezzar and the races of the north. "This land" is Judah, the הָאֶרֶץ being δεικτικῶς; so too the corresponding הָאֵלֶּה, "all these peoples

round about ;” so that we need have no doubt of the genuineness of the demonstrative. The peoples meant are those round about Judah, that are specified in vers. 19–25. הַחֲרָמִים, used frequently in Deuteronomy and Joshua for the extirpation of the Canaanites, is used by Jeremiah, besides here, only in the prophecy against Babylon, l. 21, 26, li. 3. With לְשָׂמָה וְלִשְׁרָקָה cf. xix. 8, xviii. 16 ; the words cannot be used of the peoples, but of the countries, which have been comprehended in the mention of the peoples. With “everlasting desolations,” cf. xlix. 13, Isa. lviii. 12, lxi. 4.—With ver. 10 cf. xvi. 9, vii. 34. But here the thought is strengthened by the addition : the sound of the mill and the light of the lamp. Not merely every sound of joyfulness shall vanish, but even every sign of life, such as could make known the presence of inhabitants.—Ver. 11. The land of Judah shall be made waste and desolate, and these peoples shall serve the king of Babylon for seventy years. The time indicated appertains to both clauses. “This land” is not, with Näg., to be referred to the countries inhabited by all the peoples mentioned in ver. 9, but, as in ver. 9, to be understood of the land of Judah ; and “all these peoples” are those who dwelt around Judah. The meaning is unquestionably, that Judah and the countries of the adjoining peoples shall lie waste, and that Judah and these peoples shall serve the king of Babylon ; but the thought is so distributed amongst the parallel members of the verse, that the desolation is predicated of Judah only, the serving only of the peoples—it being necessary to complete each of the parallel members from the other.

The term of seventy years mentioned is not a so-called round number, but a chronologically exact prediction of the duration of Chaldean supremacy over Judah. So the number is understood in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21, 22 ; so too by the prophet Daniel, when, Dan. ix. 2, in the first year of the Median king Darius, he took note of the seventy years which God, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah, would accomplish for the desolation of Jerusalem. The seventy years may be reckoned chronologically. From the 4th year of Jehoiakim, *i.e.* 606 B.C., till the 1st year of the sole supremacy of Cyrus over Babylon, *i.e.* 536 B.C., gives a period of 70 years. This number is arrived at by means of the dates given by profane authors as well as those of the his-

torians of Scripture. Nebuchadnezzar reigned 43 years, his son Evil-Merodach 2 years, Neriglissor 4 years, Labrosoarchad (according to Berosus) 9 months, and Naboned 17 years ($43+2+4+17$ years and 9 months are 66 years and 9 months). Add to this 1 year,—that namely which elapsed between the time when Jerusalem was first taken by Nebuchadnezzar, and the death of Nabopolassar and Nebuchadnezzar's accession,—add further the 2 years of the reign of Darius the Mede (see on Dan. vi. 1), and we have $69\frac{3}{4}$ years. With this the biblical accounts also agree. Of Jehoiakim's reign these give 7 years (from his 4th till his 11th year), for Jehoiachin's 3 months, for the captivity of Jehoiachin in Babylon until the accession of Evil-Merodach 37 years (see 2 Kings xxv. 27, according to which Evil-Merodach, when he became king, set Jehoiachin at liberty on the 27th day of the 12th month, in the 37th year after he had been carried away). Thus, till the beginning of Evil-Merodach's reign, we would have 44 years and 3 months to reckon, thence till the fall of the Babylonian empire 23 years and 9 months, and 2 years of Darius the Mede, *i.e.* in all 70 years complete.—But although this number corresponds so exactly with history, it is less its arithmetical value that is of account in Jeremiah; it is rather its symbolical significance as the number of perfection for God's works. This significance lies in the contrast of seven, as the characteristic number for works of God, with ten, the number that marks earthly completeness; and hereby prophecy makes good its distinguishing character as contrasted with soothsaying, or the prediction of contingent matters. The symbolical value of the number comes clearly out in the following verses, where the fall of Babylon is announced to come in seventy years, although it took place two years earlier.

Vers. 12-14. *The overthrow of the king of Babylon's sovereignty.*
 —Ver. 12. "But when seventy years are accomplished, I will visit their iniquity upon the king of Babylon and upon that people, saith Jahveh, and upon the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it everlasting desolations. Ver. 13. And I bring upon that land all my words which I have spoken concerning it, all that is written in this book, that Jeremiah hath prophesied concerning all peoples. Ver. 14. For of them also shall many

nations and great kings serve themselves, and I will requite them according to their doing and according to the work of their hands."

The punishment or visitation of its iniquity upon Babylon was executed when the city was taken, after a long and difficult siege, by the allied Medes and Persians under Cyrus' command. This was in B.C. 538, just 68 years after Jerusalem was taken by Nebuchadnezzar for the first time. From the time of the fall of Babylon the sovereignty passed to the Medes and Persians; so that the dominion of Babylon over Judah and the surrounding nations, taken exactly, lasted 68 years, for which the symbolically significant number 70 is used. The Masoretes have changed the *Chet*. חֶבְאֵלִי into חֶבְאֵלִי (*Keri*), because the latter is the usual form and is that which alone elsewhere occurs in Jeremiah, cf. iii. 14, xxxvi. 31, xlix. 36 f.; whereas in ver. 9 they have pointed חֶבְאֵלִים, because this form is found in Isa. lvi. 7, Ezek. xxxiv. 13, and Neh. i. 9.—The second half of the 13th verse, from "all that is written" onwards, was not, of course, spoken by Jeremiah to the people, but was first added to explain "all my words," etc., when his prophecies were written down and published. Ver. 14. The perfect עָבַרְי is to be regarded as a prophetic present. עָבַרְי, impose labour, servitude on one, cf. xxii. 13, i.e. reduce one to servitude. נִם הִפְּיָה is an emphatic repetition of the pronoun נִם, cf. Gesen. § 121, 3. Upon them, too (the Chaldeans), shall many peoples and great kings impose service, i.e. they shall make the Chaldeans bondsmen, reduce them to subjection. With "I will requite them," cf. l. 29, li. 24, where this idea is repeatedly expressed.¹

¹ Vers. 11b-14 are pronounced by Hitz., Ew., Graf to be spurious and interpolated; but Hitz. excepts the second half of ver. 14, and proposes to set it immediately after the first half of ver. 11. Their main argument is the dogmatic prejudice, that in the fourth year of Jehoiakim Jeremiah could not have foretold the fall of Babylon after seventy years' domination. The years foretold, says Hitz., "would coincide by all but two years, or, if Darius the Mede be a historical person, perhaps quite entirely. Such correspondence between history and prophecy would be a surprising accident, or else Jeremiah must have known beforehand the number of years during which the subjection to Babylon would last." Now the seventy years of Babylon's sovereignty are mentioned again in xxix. 10, where Jeremiah

Vers. 15-29. *The cup of God's fury.*—Ver. 15. "For thus hath Jahveh, the God of Israel, said to me: Take this cup of the wine of fury at my hand, and give it to drink to all the peoples to whom I send thee, Ver. 16. That they may drink, and reel, and be mad, because of the sword that I send amongst them. Ver. 17. And I took the cup at the hand of Jahveh, and made all the peoples drink it to whom Jahveh had sent me: Ver. 18. Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, and her kings, her princes, to make them a desolation and an astonishment, an hissing and a curse, as it is this day; Ver. 19. Pharaoh the

promises the exiles that after seventy years they shall return to their native land, and no doubt is thrown by the above-mentioned critics on this statement; but there the seventy years are said to be a so-called round number, because that prophecy was composed nine years later than the present one. But on the other hand, almost all comm. have remarked that the utterance of xxix. 10: "when as for Babylon seventy years are accomplished, will I visit you," points directly back to the prophecy before us (xxv.), and so gives a testimony to the genuineness of our 11th verse. And thus at the same time the assertion is disposed of, that in xxix. 10 the years given are a round number; for it is not there said that seventy years will be accomplished from the time of that letter addressed by the prophet to those in Babylon, but the *terminus a quo* of the seventy years is assumed as known already from the present twenty-fifth chap.—The other arguments brought forward by Hitz. against the genuineness of the verse have already been pronounced inconclusive by Näg. Nevertheless Näg. himself asserts the spuriousness, not indeed of ver. 11b (the seventy years' duration of Judah's Babylonian bondage), but of vers. 12-14, and on the following grounds:—1. Although in ver. 11, and below in ver. 26, it is indicated that Babylon itself will not be left untouched by the judgment of the Lord, yet (he says) it is incredible that in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the prophet could have spoken of the fall of Babylon in such a full and emphatic manner as is the case in vers. 12-14. But no obvious reason can be discovered why this should be incredible. For though in ver. 26 Jeremiah makes use of the name *Sheshach* for Babylon, it does not hence follow that at that moment he desired to speak of it only in a disguised manner. In the statement that the Jews should serve the king of Babylon seventy years, it was surely clearly enough implied that after the seventy years Babylon's sovereignty should come to an end. Still less had Jeremiah occasion to fear that the announcement of the fall of Babylon after seventy years would confirm the Jews in their defiant determination not to be tributary to Babylon. The prophets of the Lord did not suffer themselves to be regulated in their prophesying by such reasons of human expediency.—2. Of more weight are his other two arguments. Vers. 12 and 13 presume the existence of the prophecy against Babylon, chap. l. and li., which was not composed till the fourth year of

king of Egypt, and his servants, and his princes, and all his people; Ver. 20. And all the mixed races and all the kings of the land of Uz, and all the kings of the land of the Philistines, Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod; Ver. 21. Edom, and Moab, and the sons of Ammon; Ver. 22. All the kings of Tyre, all the kings of Sidon, and the kings of the islands beyond the sea; Ver. 23. Dedan, and Tema, and Buz, and all with the corners of their hair polled; Ver. 24. And all the kings of Arabia, and all the kings of the mixed races that dwell in the wilderness; Ver. 25. All the kings of Zimri, and all the kings of Elam, and all the kings of Media; Ver. 26.

Zedekiah; and the second half of ver. 13 presumes the existence of the other prophecies against the nations, and that too as a כִּפּוּר. And although the greater number of these prophecies are older than the time of the battle at Carchemish, yet we may see (says Näg.) from the relation of apposition in which the second half of ver. 13 stands to the first, that here that *Sepher* against the peoples is meant in which the prophecy against Babylon was already contained. But from all this nothing further follows than that the words: "all that is written in this book and that Jeremiah prophesied against the peoples," were not uttered by Jeremiah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, but were first appended at the editing of the prophecies or the writing of them down in the book which has come down to us. The demonstrative הַזֶּה does by no means show that he who wrote it regarded the present passage, namely chap. xxv., as belonging to the *Sepher* against the peoples, or that the prophecies against the peoples must have stood in immediate connection with chap. xxv. It only shows that the prophecies against the peoples too were found in the book which contained chap. xxv. Again, it is true that the first half of ver. 14 occurs again somewhat literally in xxvii. 7; but we do not at all see in this reliable evidence that Jeremiah could not have written ver. 14. Näg. finds this conclusion mainly on the allegation that the *perf.* עָבְדִּי is wrong, whereas in xxvii. 7 it is joined regularly by וְ consec. to the indication of time which precedes. But the perfect is here to be regarded as the prophetic present, marking the future as already accomplished in the divine counsel; just as in xxvii. 6 the categorical נִתְּחִי represents as accomplished that which in reality yet awaited its fulfilment. Accordingly we regard none of these arguments as conclusive. On the other hand, the fact that the Alexandrian translators have rendered vers. 12 and 13, and have made the last clause of ver. 13 the heading to the oracles against the peoples, furnishes an unexceptionable testimony to the genuineness of all three verses. Nor is this testimony weakened by the omission in that translation of ver. 14; for this verse could not but be omitted when the last clause of ver. 13 had been taken as a heading, since the contents of ver. 14 were incompatible with that view.

And all the kings of the north, near and far, one with another, and all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth; and the king of Sheshach shall drink after them. Ver. 27. And say to them: Thus hath Jahveh, the God of Israel, said: Drink and be drunken, and spue, and fall and rise not up again, because of the sword which I send among you. Ver. 28. And if it be that they refuse to take the cup out of thine hand to drink, then say to them: Thus hath Jahveh of hosts said: Drink ye shall. Ver. 29. For, behold, on the city upon which my name is named I begin to bring evil, and ye think to go unpunished? Ye shall not go unpunished; for I call the sword against all inhabitants of the earth, saith Jahveh of hosts."

To illustrate more fully the threatening against Judah and all peoples, ver. 9 ff., the judgment the Lord is about to execute on all the world is set forth under the similitude of a flagon filled with wrath, which the prophet is to hand to all the kings and peoples, one after another, and which he does give them to drink. The symbolical action imposed upon the prophet and, acc. to ver. 17, performed by him, serves to give emphasis to the threatening, and is therefore introduced by וְיָ; of which Graf erroneously affirms that it conveys a meaning only when vers. 11b-14 are omitted. Giving the peoples to drink of the cup of wrath is a figure not uncommon with the prophets for divine chastisements to be inflicted; cf. xlix. 12, li. 7, Isa. li. 17, 22, Ezek. xxiii. 31 ff., Hab. ii. 15, Ps. lx. 5, lxxv. 9, etc. The cup of wine which is wrath (fury). כַּסֵּי is an explanatory apposition to "wine." The wine with which the cup is filled is the wrath of God. הַיָּיִן belongs to בּוֹס, which is fem., cf. Ezek. xxiii. 32, 34, Lam. iv. 21, whereas אֶתֵּן belongs to the wine which is wrath. In ver. 16, where the purpose with which the cup of wrath is to be presented is given, figure is exchanged for fact: they shall reel and become mad because of the sword which the Lord sends amidst them. To reel, sway to and fro, like drunken men. הִתְהַלֵּל, demean oneself insanelly, be mad. The sword as a weapon of war stands often for war, and the thought is: war with its horrors will stupefy the peoples, so that they perish helpless and powerless.—Ver. 17. This duty imposed by the Lord Jeremiah performs; he takes

the cup and makes all peoples drink it. Here the question has been suggested, how Jeremiah performed this commission: whether he made journeys to the various kings and peoples, or, as J. D. Mich. thought, gave the cup to ambassadors, who were perhaps then in Jerusalem. This question is the result of an imperfect understanding of the case. The prophet does not receive from God a flagon filled with wine which he is to give, as a symbol of divine wrath, to the kings and peoples; he receives a cup filled with the wrath of God, which is to intoxicate those that drink of it. As the wrath of God is no essence that may be drunk by the bodily act, so manifestly the cup is no material cup, and the drinking of it no act of the outer, physical reality. The whole action is accordingly only emblematical of a real work of God wrought on kings and peoples, and is performed by Jeremiah when he announces what he is commanded. And the announcement he accomplished not by travelling to each of the nations named, but by declaring to the king and his princes in Jerusalem the divine decree of judgment.

The enumeration begins with Judah, ver. 18, on which first judgment is to come. Along with it are named Jerusalem, the capital, and the other cities, and then the kings and princes; whereas in what follows, for the most part only the kings, or, alternating with them, the peoples, are mentioned, to show that kings and peoples alike must fall before the coming judgment. The plural "kings of Judah" is used as in xix. 3. The consequence of the judgment: to make them a desolation, etc., runs as in vers. 9, 11, xix. 8, xxiv. 9. כִּי יִהְיֶה has here the force: as is now about to happen.—Ver. 19 ff. The enumeration of the heathen nations begins with Egypt and goes northwards, the peoples dwelling to the east and west of Judah being ranged alongside one another. First we have in ver. 20 the races of Arabia and Philistia that bordered on Egypt to the east and west; then in ver. 21 the Edomites, Moabites, and Ammonites to the east, and, ver. 22, the Phœnicians with their colonies to the west. Next we have the Arabian tribes of the desert extending eastwards from Palestine to the Euphrates (vers. 23, 24); then the Elamites and Medes in the distant east (ver. 25), the near and distant kings of the north, and all

kingdoms upon earth; last of all the king of Babylon (ver 26). בְּלִהְעָרָב, LXX.: *πάντας τοὺς συμμίκτους*, and Jerome: *cunctus-que qui non est Aegyptius, sed in ejus regionibus commoratur*. The word means originally a mixed multitude of different races that attach themselves to one people and dwell as strangers amongst them; cf. Ex. xii. 38 and Neh. xiii. 3. Here it is races that in part dwelt on the borders of Egypt and were in subjection to that people. It is rendered accordingly "vassals" by Ew.; an interpretation that suits the present verse very well, but will not do in ver. 24. It is certainly too narrow a view, to confine the reference of the word to the mercenaries or Ionian and Carian troops by whose help Necho's father Psammetichus acquired sole supremacy (Graf), although this be the reference of the same word in Ezek. xxx. 5. The land of Uz is, acc. to the present passage and to Lam. iv. 21, where the daughter of Edom dwells in the land of Uz, to be sought for in the neighbourhood of Idumæa and the Egyptian border. To delete the words "and all the kings of the land of Uz" as a gloss, with Hitz. and Gr., because they are not in the LXX., is an exercise of critical violence. The LXX. omitted them for the same reason as that on which Hitz. still lays stress—namely, that they manifestly do not belong to this place, but to ver. 23. And this argument is based on the idea that the land of Uz (*Ἀυσίτις*) lies much farther to the north in Arabia Deserta, in the Hauran or the region of Damascus, or that it is a collective name for the whole northern region of Arabia Deserta that stretches from Idumæa as far as Syria; see Del. on Job i. 1, and Wetzstein in Del.'s Job, S. 536 f. This is an assumption for which valid proofs are not before us. The late oriental legends as to Job's native country do not suffice for this. The kings of the land of the Philistines are the kings of the four towns next in order mentioned, with their territories, cf. Josh. xiii. 3, 1 Sam. vi. 4. The fifth of the towns of the lords of the Philistines, *Gath*, is omitted here as it was before this, in Amos i. 7 f. and Zeph. ii. 4, and later in Zech. ix. 5, not because Gath had already fallen into premature decay; for in Amos' time Gath was still a very important city. It is rather, apparently, because Gath had ceased to be the capital of a separate kingdom or principality. There is remain-

stitutes a commentary on the name; cf. Hgstb. *Christ.* iii. p. 377. The name does not sig. humiliation, in support of which Graf has recourse partly to שָׁחָה, partly to the Arabic usage. For other arbitrary interpretations, see in Ges. *thes.* p. 1486.¹

From ver. 27 onwards the commission from God (ver. 15 f.) is still more completely communicated to Jeremiah, so that the record of its fulfilment (vers. 17-26), together with the enumeration of the various peoples, is to be regarded as an explanatory parenthesis. These might the less unsuitably be inserted after ver. 16, inasmuch as what there is further of the divine command in vers. 27-29 is, if we examine its substance, little else than an enforcement of the command. The prophet is not merely to declare to them what is the meaning of this drinking of wrath (Hitz.), but is to tell them that they are to drink the cup of wrath to the bottom, so that they shall fall for drunkenness and not be able to stand again (ver. 27); and that they must drink, because when once Jahveh has begun judgment on His own people, He is determined not to spare any other people. קִי from קָיָה = קִי serves to strengthen the שָׁכַר; in the second hemistich the figurative statement passes into the real, as at ver. 16. In ver. 28 שָׁתוּ תִשְׁתּוּ is a peremptory command: ye shall = must drink. Ver. 29 gives the reason: since God spares not His own people, then the heathen people need not count on immunity. "And ye think to go unpunished" is a question of surprise. Judgment is to be extended over all the inhabitants of the earth.

As to the fulfilment of this prophecy, see details in the exposition of the oracles against the nations, chap. xlv.-li. Hence it

¹ As has been done with the whole or with parts of vers. 12-14, so too the last clause of ver. 26 is pronounced by Ew., Hitz., and Graf to be spurious, a gloss that had ultimately found its way into the text. This is affirmed because the clause is wanting in the LXX., and because the prophet could not fitly threaten Babylon along with the other nations (Hitz.); or because "the specification of a single kingdom seems very much out of place, after the enumeration of the countries that are to drink the cup of wrath has been concluded by the preceding comprehensive intimation, 'all the kingdoms of the earth'" (Gr.). Both reasons are valueless. By "shall drink after them" Babylon is sufficiently distinguished from the other kings and countries mentioned, and the reason is given why Babylon is not put on the same footing with them, but is to be made to drink after them.

appears that most of the nations here mentioned were subject to Nebuchadnezzar. Only of *Elam* is no express mention there made; and as to *Media*, Jeremiah has given no special prophecy. As to both these peoples, it is very questionable whether Nebuchadnezzar ever subdued them. For more on this, see on xlix. 34-39. Although it is said in ver. 9 of the present chapter and in chap. xxvii. 5 ff. that God has given all peoples, all the lands of the earth, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, yet it does not follow thence that Nebuchadnezzar really conquered all. The meaning of the prophetic announcement is simply that the king of Babylon will obtain dominion over the world for the coming period, and that when his time is run, he too must fall beneath the judgment. The judgment executed by Nebuchadnezzar on the nations is the beginning of that upon the whole earth, before which, in course of time, all inhabitants of the earth fall, even those whom Nebuchadnezzar's sword has not reached. In the beginning of the Chaldean judgment the prophet sees the beginning of judgment upon the whole earth.

Vers. 30-38. "But do thou prophesy to them all these words, and say unto them: Jahveh will roar from on high, and from His holy habitation let His voice resound; He will roar against His pasture, raise a shout like treading of grapes against all the inhabitants of the earth. Ver. 31. Noise reacheth to the end of the earth, for controversy hath Jahveh with the nations; contend will He with all flesh; the wicked He gives to the sword, is the saying of Jahveh. Ver. 32. Thus saith Jahveh of hosts: Behold, evil goeth forth from nation to nation, and (a) great storm shall raise itself from the utmost coasts of the earth. Ver. 33. And the slain of Jahveh shall lie on that day from one end of the earth unto the other, shall not be lamented, neither gathered nor buried; for dung shall they be upon the ground. Ver. 34. Howl, ye shepherds, and cry! and sprinkle you (with ashes), ye lordliest of the flock! For your days are filled for the slaughter; and I scatter you so that ye shall fall like a precious vessel. Ver. 35. Lost is flight to the shepherds, and escape to the lordliest of the flock. Ver. 36. Hark! Crying of the shepherds and howling of the lordliest of the flock; for Jahveh layeth waste their pasture. Ver. 37. Desolated are

the pastures of peace because of the heat of Jahveh's anger. Ver. 38. He hath forsaken like a young lion his covert; for their land is become a desert, because of the oppressing sword, and because of the heat of His anger."

In this passage the emblem of the cup of the Lord's anger (vers. 25-29) is explained by a description of the dreadful judgment God is to inflict on all the inhabitants of the earth. This is not the judgment on the world at large as distinguished from that proclaimed in vers. 15-29 against the kingdom of God and the kingdoms of the world, as Näg. supposes. It is the nature of this same judgment that is here discussed, no regard being here paid to the successive steps of its fulfilment. Vers. 30 and 31 are only a further expansion of the second half of ver. 29. "All these words" refers to what follows. The clause "Jahveh will roar" to "let His voice resound" is a reminiscence from Joel iv. 16 and Amos i. 2; but instead of "out of Zion and out of Jerusalem" in those passages, we have here "from on high," *i.e.* heaven, and out of His holy habitation (in heaven), because the judgment is not to fall on the heathen only, but on the theocracy in a special manner, and on the earthly sanctuary, the temple itself, so that it can come only from heaven or the upper sanctuary. Jahveh will roar like a lion against His pasture (the pasture or meadow where His flock feeds, cf. x. 25); a name for the holy land, including Jerusalem and the temple; not: the world subject to Him (Ew.). הִירָדוּ, He will answer *Hedad* like treaders of grapes; *i.e.* raise a shout as they do. Answer; inasmuch as the shout or war-cry of Jahveh is the answer to the words and deeds of the wicked. Grammatically הִירָדוּ is *accus.* and object to the verb: *Hedad* he gives as answer. The word is from הָרָר, crash, and signifies the loud cry with which those that tread grapes keep time to the alternate raising and thrusting of the feet. Ew. is accordingly correct, though far from happy, in rendering the word "tramping-song;" see on Isa. xvi. 9 f. As to the figure of the treader of grapes, cf. Isa. lxiii. 3.—Ver. 31. שִׁעָזִן is the din of war, the noise of great armies, cf. Isa. xvii. 12 f., etc. For the Lord conducts a controversy, a cause at law, with the nations, with all flesh, *i.e.* with all mankind; cf. ii. 9, 35.—הָרָשָׁעִים is for the sake of emphasis put first and resumed again in the suffix

to נָתַתָּם. "Give to the sword" as in xv. 9.—Ver. 32 f. As a fierce storm (cf. xxiii. 19) rises from the ends of the earth on the horizon, so will evil burst forth and seize on one nation after another. Those slain by Jahveh will then lie, unmourned and unburied, from one end of the earth to the other; cf. viii. 2, xvi. 4. With "slain of Jahveh," cf. Isa. lxvi. 16. Jahveh slays them by the sword in war.—Ver. 34. No rank is spared. This is intimated in the summons to howl and lament addressed to the shepherds, *i.e.* the kings and rulers on earth (cf. x. 21, xxii. 22, etc.), and to the lordly or glorious of the flock, *i.e.* to the illustrious, powerful, and wealthy. With "sprinkle you," cf. vi. 26. Your days are full or filled for the slaughter, *i.e.* the days of your life are full, so that ye shall be slain; cf. Lam. iv. 18. יִתְפָּצוּתֵיכֶם is obscure and hard to explain. It is so read by the Masora, while many *codd.* and *editt.* have יִתְפָּצוּתֵיכֶם. According to this latter form, Jerome, Rashi, Kimchi, lately Maur. and Umbr., hold the word for a substantive: your dispersions. But whether we connect this with what precedes or what follows, we fail to obtain a fitting sense from it. Your days are full and your dispersions, for: the time is come when ye shall be slain and dispersed, cannot be maintained, because "dispersions" is not in keeping with "are full." Again: as regards your dispersions, ye shall fall, would give a good meaning, only if "your dispersions" meant: the flock dispersed by the fault of the shepherds; and with this the second pers. "ye shall fall" does not agree. The sig. of fatness given by Ew. to the word is wholly arbitrary. Hitz., Gr., and Näg. take the word to be a Tiphil (like תהרה, xii. 5, xxii. 15), and read תִּפְּצוּתֵיכֶם, I scatter you. This gives a suitable sense; and there is no valid reason for attaching to the word, as Hitz. and Gr. do, the force of פָּצַץ or נָפַץ, smite in pieces. The thought, that one part of the flock shall be slain, the other scattered, seems quite apt; so also is that which follows, that they that are scattered shall fall and break like precious, *i.e.* fine, ornamental vases. Hence there was no occasion for Ew.'s conjectural emendation, פָּצְרִי, like precious lambs. Nor does the LXX. rendering: ὡσπερ οἱ κριοὶ οἱ ἐκλεκτοί, give it any support; for קָרִים does not mean rams, but lambs. The similar comparison of Jechoniah to a worthless vessel (xxii. 28) tells in favour of the reading in the

text (Graf).—In ver. 35 the threatening is made more woeful by the thought, that the shepherds shall find no refuge, and that no escape will be open to the sheep.—Ver. 36 f. The prophet is already hearing in spirit the lamentation to which in ver. 34 he has called them, because Jahveh has laid waste the pastures of the shepherds and their flocks, and destroyed the peaceful meadows by the heat of His anger.—In ver. 38, finally, the discourse is rounded off by a repetition and expansion of the thought with which the description of the judgment was begun in ver. 30. As a young lion forsakes his covert to seek for prey, so Jahveh has gone forth out of His heavenly habitation to hold judgment on the people; for their (the shepherds') land becomes a desert. The perff. are prophetic. יָיִן has grounding force. The desolation of the land gives proof that the Lord has arisen to do judgment. הִרְוֶה הַיִּנָּה seems strange, since the adjective הַיִּנָּה never occurs independently, but only in connection with תָּרַב (xlvi. 16, l. 16, and with עִיר, Zeph. iii. 1). הִרְוֶה, again, is regularly joined with אָף, and only three times besides with a suffix referring to Jahveh (Ex. xv. 7; Ps. ii. 5; Ezek. vii. 14). In this we find justification for the conjecture of Hitz., Ew., Gr., etc., that we should read with the LXX. and Chald. הִרְבֵּה הַיִּנָּה. The article with the adj. after the subst. without one, here and in xlvi. 16, l. 16, is to be explained by the looseness of connection between the participle and its noun; cf. Ew. § 335, a.

Chap. xxvi. *Accusation and Acquittal of Jeremiah in the matter of his prophesying Threatenings. The Prophet Urijah put to death.*

This chapter is separated from the discourses that precede and follow by a heading of its own, and dates from the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim; whereas the following chap. xxvii.–xxix. fall into the earlier years of Zedekiah's reign. In point of matter, however, the present chapter is closely connected with these latter, though the connection between them is certainly not that held to exist by Ew. His view is, that chap. xxvii.–xxix. furnish "three historical supplements regarding true and false prophethood," in each of which we are told in the first place how the prophet himself

acted, the account being concluded with notices of prophets who either prophesied what was directly false, or who vindicated the truth with but insufficient steadfastness. As against this, Graf justly observes, "that this is in keeping neither with the real contents of chap. xxvii-xxix. nor with chap. xxvi. ; for Micah was far from being a false prophet, and Urijah was as little wanting in courage as was Jeremiah, who hid himself from Jehoiakim, xxxvi. 19, 26."—Chap. xxvii.-xxix. are related in the closest possible manner to chap. xxv. ; for all that is said by Jeremiah in these chapters has manifestly for its aim to vindicate the truth of his announcement, that Judah's captivity in Chaldea would last seventy years, as against the false prophets, who foretold a speedy return of the exiles into their fatherland. To this the contents of chap. xxvi. form a sort of prelude, inasmuch as here we are informed of the attitude assumed by the leaders of the people, by the priests and prophets, and by King Jehoiakim towards the prophet's announcement of judgment about to fall on Judah. Thus we are put in a position to judge of the opposition on the part of the people and its leaders, with which his prophecy of the seventy years' bondage of Judah was likely to meet. For this reason chap. xxvi., with its historical notices, is inserted after xxv. and before xxvii.-xxix.

Vers. 1-19. ACCUSATION AND ACQUITTAL OF JEREMIAH.—

Vers. 1-7. His prophecy that temple and city would be destroyed gave occasion to the accusation of the prophet.—Ver. 1. "In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah king of Judah, came this word from Jahveh, saying: Ver. 2. Thus said Jahveh: Stand in the court of the house of Jahveh, and speak to all the cities of Judah which come to worship in Jahveh's house, all the words that I have commanded thee to speak to them; take not a word therefrom. Ver. 3. Perchance they will hearken and turn each from his evil way, that I may repent me of the evil which I purpose to do unto them for the evil of their doings. Ver. 4. And say unto them: Thus saith Jahveh: If ye hearken not to me, to walk in my law which I have set before you, Ver. 5. To hearken to the words of my servants the prophets whom I sent unto you, from early morning on

sending, but ye have not hearkened, Ver. 6. Then I make this house like Shiloh, and this city a curse to all the peoples of the earth. Ver. 7. And the priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of Jahveh."

In the discourse of chap. vii., where he was combating the people's false reliance upon the temple, Jeremiah had already threatened that the temple should share the fate of Shiloh, unless the people turned from its evil ways. Now, since that discourse was also delivered in the temple, and since vers. 2-6 of the present chapter manifestly communicate only the substance of what the prophet said, several comm. have held these discourses to be identical, and have taken it for granted that the discourse here referred to, belonging to the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign, was given in full in chap. vii., while the history of it has been given in the present chapter by way of supplement (cf. the introductory remarks to chap. vii.). But considering that it is a peculiarity of Jeremiah frequently to repeat certain of the main thoughts of his message, the saying of God, that He will do to the temple as He has done to Shiloh, is not sufficient to warrant this assumption. Jeremiah frequently held discourses in the temple, and more than once foretold the destruction of Jerusalem; so that it need not be surprising if on more than one occasion he threatened the temple with the fate of Shiloh. Between the two discourses there is further this distinction: Whereas in chap. vii. the prophet speaks chiefly of the spoliation or destruction of the temple and the expulsion of the people into exile, here in brief incisive words he intimates the destruction of the city of Jerusalem as well; and the present chapter throughout gives the impression that by this, so to speak, peremptory declaration, the prophet sought to move the people finally to decide for Jahveh its God, and that he thus so exasperated the priests and prophets present, that they seized him and pronounced him worthy of death.—According to the heading, this took place in the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim. The like specification in the heading of chap. xxvii. does not warrant us to refer the date to the fourth year of this king. "The beginning" intimates simply that the discourse belongs to the earlier period of Jehoiakim's reign, with-

out minuter information as to year and day. "To Jeremiah" seems to have been dropped out after "came this word," ver. 1. The court of the house of God is not necessarily the inner or priests' court of the temple; it may have been the outer one where the people assembled; cf. xix. 14. All the "cities of Judah" for their inhabitants, as in xi. 12. The addition: "take not a word therefrom," cf. Deut. iv. 2, xiii. 1, indicates the peremptory character of the discourse. In full, without softening the threat by the omission of anything the Lord commanded him, *i.e.* he is to proclaim the word of the Lord in its full unconditional severity, to move the people, if possible, to repentance, acc. to ver. 3. With ver. 3*b*, cf. xviii. 8, etc.—In vers. 4-6 we have the contents of the discourse. If they hearken not to the words of the prophet, as has hitherto been the case, the Lord will make the temple as Shiloh, and this city, *i.e.* Jerusalem, a curse, *i.e.* an object of curses (cf. xxiv. 9), for all peoples. On this cf. vii. 12 ff. But ye have not hearkened. The *Chet.* הַזֶּה Hitz. holds to be an error of transcription; Ew. § 173, *g*, and Olsh. *Gramm.* § 101, *c*, and 133, a paragogically lengthened form; Böttcher, *Lehrb.* § 665. iii. and 897, 3, a toneless appended suffix, strengthening the demonstrative force: *this (city) here.*

Vers. 8-19. *The behaviour of the priests, prophets, and princes of the people towards Jeremiah on account of this discourse.*—Ver. 7 ff. When the priests and prophets and all the people present in the temple had heard this discourse, they laid hold of Jeremiah, saying, Ver. 8 f. "Thou must die. Wherefore prophesiest thou in the name of Jahveh, saying, Like Shiloh shall this house become, and this city shall be desolate, without inhabitant? And all the people gathered to Jeremiah in the house of Jahveh." This last remark is not so to be understood, when compared with vers. 7 and 8, as that all the people who, according to ver. 7, had been hearing the discourse, and, according to ver. 8, had with the priests and prophets laid hold on Jeremiah, gathered themselves to him now. It means, that after one part of the people present had, along with the priests and prophets, laid hold on him, the whole people gathered around him. "All the people," ver. 9, is accordingly to be distinguished from "all the people," ver. 8; and the word בָּל,

all, must not be pressed, in both cases meaning simply a great many. When it is thus taken, there is no reason for following Hitz., and deleting "all the people" in ver. 8 as a gloss. Jeremiah's special opponents were the priests and prophets after their own hearts. But to them there adhered many from among the people; and these it is that are meant by "all the people," ver. 8. But since these partisans of the priests and pseudo-prophets had no independent power of their own to pass judgment, and since, after Jeremiah was laid hold of, all the rest of the people then in the temple gathered around him, it happens that in ver. 11 the priests and prophets are opposed to "all the people," and are mentioned as being alone the accusers of Jeremiah.—When the princes of Judah heard what had occurred, they repaired from the king's house (the palace) to the temple, and seated themselves in the entry of the new gate of Jahveh, *sc.* to investigate and decide the case. The new gate was, according to xxxvi. 10, by the upper, *i.e.* inner court, and is doubtless the same that Jotham caused to be built (2 Kings xv. 35); but whether it was identical with the upper gate of Benjamin, xx. 2, cannot be decided. The princes of Judah, since they came up into the temple from the palace, are the judicial officers who were at that time about the palace. The judges were chosen from among the heads of the people; cf. my *Bibl. Archäol.* ii. § 149.—Ver. 10. Before these princes, about whom all the people gathered, Jeremiah is accused by the priests and prophets: "This man is worthy of death;" literally: a sentence of death (cf. Deut. xix. 6), condemnation to death, is due to this man; "for he hath prophesied against this city, as ye have heard with your ears." With these last words they appeal to the people standing round who had heard the prophecy, for the princes had not reached the temple till after Jeremiah had been apprehended. Ver 12. To this Jeremiah answered in his own defence before the princes and all the people: "Jahveh hath sent me to prophesy against (בְּ for בָּ) this house and against this city all the words which ye have heard. Ver. 13. And now make your ways good and your doings, and hearken to the voice of Jahveh your God, and Jahveh will repent Him of the evil that He hath spoken against you. Ver. 14. But I, behold, I am in your hand; do with me

as seemeth to you good and right. Ver. 15. Only ye must know, that if ye put me to death, ye bring innocent blood upon you, and upon this city, and upon her inhabitants; for of a truth Jahveh hath sent me to you to speak in your ears all these words." — As to "make your ways good," cf. vii. 3. This defence made an impression on the princes and on all the people. From the intimation that by reform it was possible to avert the threatened calamity, and from the appeal to the fact that in truth Jahveh had sent him and commanded him so to speak, they see that he is a true prophet, whose violent death would bring blood-guiltiness upon the city and its inhabitants. They therefore declare to the accusers, ver. 16: "This man is not worthy of death, for in the name of Jahveh our God hath he spoken unto us."—Vers. 17-19. To justify and confirm this sentence, certain of the elders of the land rise and point to the like sentence passed on the prophet Micah of Moresheth-Gath, who had foretold the destruction of the city and temple under King Hezekiah, but had not been put to death by the king; Hezekiah, on the contrary, turning to prayer to the Lord, and thus succeeding in averting the catastrophe. The "men of the elders of the land" are different from "all the princes," and are not to be taken, as by Graf, for representatives of the people in the capacity of assessors at judicial decisions, who had to give their voice as to guilt or innocence; nor are they necessarily to be regarded as local authorities of the land. They come before us here solely in their character as elders of the people, who possessed a high authority in the eyes of the people. The saying of the Morasthite Micah which they cite in ver. 18 is found in Mic. iii. 12, verbally agreeing with ver. 18; see the exposition of that passage. The stress of what they say lies in the conclusion drawn by them from Micah's prophecy, taken in connection with Hezekiah's attitude towards the Lord, ver. 19: "Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put him to death? Did he not fear Jahveh and entreat Jahveh, and did not Jahveh repent Him of the evil which He had spoken concerning them? and we would commit a great evil against our souls?" Neither in the book of Micah, nor in the accounts of the books of Kings, nor in the chronicle of Hezekiah's reign are we told that, in consequence of that

prophecy of Micah, Hezekiah entreated the Lord and so averted judgment from Jerusalem. There we find only that during the siege of Jerusalem by the Assyrians, Hezekiah besought the help of the Lord and protection from that mighty enemy. The elders have combined this fact with Micah's prophecy, and thence drawn the conclusion that the godly king succeeded by his prayer in averting the mischief. Cf. the remarks on this passage at Mic. iv. 10. 'הָלַךְ אֶת-פָּנָי, lit. stroke the face of Jahveh, *i.e.* entreat Him, cf. Ex. xxxii. 11. "And we would commit," are thinking of doing, are on the point of doing a great evil against our souls; inasmuch as by putting the prophet to death they would bring blood-guiltiness upon themselves and hasten the judgment of God.—The acquittal of Jeremiah is not directly related; but it may be gathered from the decision of the princes: This man is not worthy of death.

Vers. 20–24. *The prophet Urijah put to death.*—While the history we have just been considering gives testimony to the hostility of the priests and false prophets towards the true prophets of the Lord, the story of the prophet Urijah shows the hostility of King Jehoiakim against the proclaimers of divine truth. For this purpose, and not merely to show in how great peril Jeremiah then stood (Gr., Næg.), this history is introduced into our book. It is not stated that the occurrence took place at the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign, nor can we infer so much from its being placed directly after the events of that time. The time is not specified, because it was irrelevant for the case in hand. Ver. 20. A man, *Urijah* the son of *Shemaiah*—both unknown—from Kirjath-Jearim, now called Kuriyet el 'Enab, about three hours to the north-west of Jerusalem, on the frontiers of the tribe of Benjamin (see on Josh. ix. 17), prophesied in the name of Jahveh against Jerusalem and Judah very much in the same terms as Jeremiah had done. When King Jehoiakim and his great men heard this discourse, he sought after the prophet to kill him. Urijah, when he heard of it, fled to Egypt; but the king sent men after him, Elnathan the son of Achbor with some followers, and had him brought back thence, caused him to be put to death, and his body to be thrown into the graves of the common

people. Hitz. takes objection to "all his mighty men," ver. 21, because it is not found in the LXX., and is nowhere else used by Jeremiah. But these facts do not prove that the words are not genuine; the latter of the two, indeed, tells rather in favour of their genuineness, since a glossator would not readily have interpolated an expression foreign to the rest of the book. The "mighty men" are the distinguished soldiers who were about the king, the military commanders, as the "princes" are the supreme civil authorities. *Elnathan* the son of *Achbor*, according to xxxvi. 12, 25, one of Jehoiakim's princes, was a son of the Achbor who is mentioned in 2 Kings xxii. 12–14 as amongst the princes of Josiah. Whether this Elnathan was the same as the Elnathan whose daughter Nehushta was Jehoiachin's mother (2 Kings xxiv. 8), and who was therefore the king's father-in-law, must remain an undecided point, since the name Elnathan is of not unfrequent occurrence; of Levites, Ezra viii. 16. עַמִּי הָעָם (see on xvii. 19) means the common people here, as in 2 Kings xxii. 6. The place of burial for the common people was in the valley of the Kidron; see on 2 Kings xxii. 6.—Ver. 24. The narrative closes with a remark as to how, amid such hostility against the prophets of God on the part of king and people, Jeremiah escaped death. This was because the hand of *Ahikam* the son of *Shaphan* was with him. This person is named in 2 Kings xxii. 12, 14, as one of the great men sent by King Josiah to the prophetess Huldah to inquire of her concerning the book of the law recently discovered. According to Jer. xxxix. 14, xl. 5, etc., he was the father of the future Chaldean governor Gedaliah.

Chap. xxvii.—xxix. *The yoke of Babylon upon Judah and the neighbouring Peoples.*

These three chapters are closely connected with one another. They all belong to the earlier period of Zedekiah's reign, and contain words of Jeremiah by means of which he confirms and vindicates against the opposition of false prophets his announcement of the seventy years' duration of the Chaldean supremacy over Judah and the nations, and warns king and people patiently to bear the yoke laid on them by Nebuchadnezzar. The three chapters have besides an external connec-

tion. For chap. xxviii. is attached to the event of xxvii. by its introductory formula: And it came to pass in *that* year, at the beginning, etc., as xxix. is to xxviii. by יְהוֹיָכִים. To this, it is true, the heading handed down in the Masoretic text is in contradiction. The date: In the beginning of the reign of *Jehoiakim*, the son of Josiah king of Judah, came this word to Jeremiah (xxvii. 1), is irreconcilable with the date: And it came to pass in *that* year, in the beginning of the reign of *Zedekiah* king of Judah, in the fourth year, in the fifth month. The name "Jehoiakim the son of Josiah" in xxvii. 1 is erroneous. It is without doubt the blunder of a copyist who had in his mind the heading of the 26th chapter, and should have been "*Zedekiah*;" for the contents of chap. xxvii. carry us into Zedekiah's time, as plainly appears from vers. 3, 12, and 20. Hence the Syr. translation and one of Kennicott's codd. have substituted the latter name.¹

¹ Following the example of ancient comm., Haevernick in his *Introd.* (ii. 2) has endeavoured to defend the date: "In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah." To this end he ventures the hypothesis, that in chap. xxvii. there are placed beside one another three discourses agreeing in their subject-matter: "one addressed to Jehoiakim (vers. 2-11), a second to Zedekiah (vers. 12-15), a third to the priests and people;" and that the words: "by the hand of the ambassador that came to Zedekiah the king of Judah," are appended to show how Zedekiah ought to have obeyed the older prophecy of Jehoiakim's time, and how he should have borne himself towards the nations with which he was in alliance. But this does not solve the difficulty. The prophecy, vers. 4-11, is addressed to the kings of Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, and Sidon; but since the envoys of these kings did not come to Jerusalem till Zedekiah's time, we are bound, if the prophecy dates from the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign, to assume that this prophecy was communicated to Jeremiah and published by him eleven years before the event, upon occasion of which it was to be conveyed to the kings concerned. An assumption that would require unusually cogent reasons to render it credible. Vers. 4b-21 contain nothing whatever that points to Jehoiakim's time, or give countenance to the hypothesis that the three sections of this chapter contain three discourses of different dates, which have been put together on account merely of the similarity of their contents.

Beyond this one error of transcription, these three chapters contain nothing that could throw any doubt on the integrity of the text. There are no traces of a later supplementary revision by another hand, such as Mov., Hitz., and de W. profess to have discovered. The occurrence of Jeremiah's name in the contracted form יִרְמְיָה, as also of other names com-

Chap. xxvii. THE YOKE OF BABYLON.—In three sections, connected as to their date and their matter, Jeremiah prophecies to the nations adjoining Judah (vers. 2–11), to King Zedekiah (vers. 12–15), and to the priests and all the people (vers. 16–22), that God has laid on them the yoke of the king of Babylon, and that they ought to humble themselves under His almighty hand.—Ver. 1. According to the (corrected) heading, the prophecy was given in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah. If we compare chap. xxviii. we find the same date: “in that year, at the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah,” more fully defined as the fourth year of his reign. Graf has made objection, that in the case of a reign of eleven years, one could not well speak of the fourth year as the beginning of the reign. But the idea of beginning is relative (cf. Gen. x. 10), and does not necessarily coincide with that of the first year. The reign of Zedekiah is divided into two halves: the first period, or begin-

pounded with *Jahu* in the form *Jah*, does not prove later retouching; for, as Graf has shown, we find alongside of it the fuller form also (xxviii. 12, xxix. 27–30), and have frequently both longer and shorter forms in the same verse (so in xxvii. 1, xxviii. 12, xxix. 29–31). And so long as other means for distinguishing are wanting, it will not do to discriminate the manner of expression in the original text from that of the reviser by means of these forms alone. Again, as we have shown at p. 312, note, there is a good practical reason for Jeremiah’s being called “the prophet” (הַנָּבִיא); so that this too is not the reviser’s work. Finally, we cannot argue later addition from the fact that the name of the king of Babylon is written Nebuchadnezzar in xxvii. 6, 8, 20, xxviii. 3, 11, 14, xxix. 1, 3; for the same form appears again in xxxiv. 1 and xxxix. 5, and with it we have also Nebuchadrezzar in xxix. 21 and xxxix. 1. Elsewhere, it is true, we find only the one form Nebuchadnezzar, and this is the unvarying spelling in the books of Kings, Chron., Ezra, Dan., and in Esth. ii. 6; whereas Ezekiel uniformly writes Nebuchadrezzar (xxvi. 7, xxix. 18, 19, and xxx. 10), and this form Jeremiah uses twenty-seven times (xxi. 2, 7, xxii. 25, xxiv. 1, xxv. 1, 9, xxix. 21, xxxii. 1, 28, xxxv. 11, xxxvii. 1, xxxix. 1, 11, xliii. 10, xliv. 30, xlv. 2, 13, 26, xlix. 28, 30, l. 17, li. 34, lii. 4, 12, 28, 29, 30—not merely in the discourses, but in the headings and historical parts as well). But though the case is so, we are not entitled to conclude that Nebuchadnezzar was a way of pronouncing the name that came into use at a later time; the conclusion rather is, as we have remarked at p. 327, and on Dan. i. 1, that the writing with *n* represents the Jewish-Aramaean pronunciation, whereas the form Nebuchadrezzar, according to the testimony of such inscriptions as have been preserved, expresses more fairly the

ning, when he was elevated by Nebuchadnezzar, and remained subject to him, and the after or last period, when he had rebelled against his liege lord.

Vers. 2-11. *The yoke of the king of Babylon upon the kings of Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, and Sidon.*—Ver. 2. "Thus said Jahveh to me: Make thee bonds and yokes, and put them upon thy neck, Ver. 3. And send them to the king of Edom, the king of Moab, the king of the sons of Ammon, the king of Tyre, and the king of Sidon, by the hand of the messengers that are come to Jerusalem to Zedekiah king of Judah. Ver. 4. And command them to say unto their masters, Thus hath Jahveh of hosts, the God of Israel, said: Thus shall ye say unto your masters: Ver. 5. I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched hand, and give it to whom it seemeth meet unto me. Ver. 6. And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, my servant; and the beasts of the field also have I given him to serve him. Ver. 7. And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the time of his land come, and many nations and great kings serve themselves of him. Ver. 8. And the people and the kingdom that will not serve him, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon,

Assyrian pronunciation. The Jewish way of pronouncing would naturally not arise till after the king of Babylon had appeared in Palestine, from which time the Jews would have this name often on their lips. Hence it is in the book of Jeremiah alone that we find both forms of the name (that with *r* 27 times, that with *n* 10 times). How it has come about that the latter form is used just three times in each of chap. xxvii. and xxviii. cannot with certainty be made out. But note, (1) that the form with *n* occurs twice in xxviii. (vers. 3 and 11) in the speech of the false prophet Hananiah, and then, ver. 14, in Jeremiah's answer to that speech; (2) that the prophecy of chap. xxvii. was addressed partly to the envoys of the kings of Edom, Moab, Ammon, and Phœnicia, while it is partly a warning to the people against the lying speeches of the false prophets, and that it is just in these portions, vers. 6, 8, and 20, that the name so written occurs. If we consider this, we cannot avoid the conjecture, that by changing the *r* for *n*, the Jewish people had accommodated to their own mode of utterance the strange-sounding name *Nabucudururur*, and that Jeremiah made use of the popular pronunciation in these two discourses, whereas elsewhere in all his discourses he uses *Nebuchadrezzar* alone; for the remaining cases in which we find *Nebuchadnezzar* in this book are contained in historical notices.

and that will not put its neck into the yoke of the king of Babylon, with sword, with famine, and with pestilence I will visit that people, until I have made an end of them by his hand. Ver. 9. And ye, hearken not to your prophets, and your soothsayers, and to your dreams, to your enchanters and your sorcerers, which speak unto you, saying : Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon. Ver. 10. For they prophesy a lie unto you, that I should remove you far from your land, and that I should drive you out and ye should perish. Ver. 11. But the people that will bring its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon and will serve him, that will I let remain in its land, saith Jahveh, to till it and to dwell therein."

The yoke Jeremiah is to make and lay on his neck is a plain emblem of the Babylonian yoke the nations are to bear. The words "bonds and yokes" denote together one yoke. מִטְּוִי are the two wooden beams or poles of the yoke, which were fastened together by means of the מִוִּסְרוֹת, bonds, ropes, so that the yoke might be laid on the beast's neck; cf. Lev. xxvi. 13. That Jeremiah really put such a yoke on his neck and wore it, we see from xxviii. 10, 12, where a false prophet breaks it for him. He is to send the yoke to the kings of Edom, Moab, etc., by means of envoys of those kings, who were come to Jerusalem to Zedekiah. And since Jeremiah laid a yoke on his own neck, and so carried out the commanded symbolical action in objective reality, there is no reason to doubt that he made yokes for the five kings named and gave them to their respective envoys. Chr. B. Mich., Hitz., Graf, hold this to be improbable, and suppose that Jeremiah only made a yoke for himself and put it on his neck; but by appearing abroad with it, he set before the eyes of the ambassadors the yoke that was to be laid on their kings, and, in a certain sense, emblematically gave it to them. But even though this might have sufficed to accomplish the aim of the prophecy, it is difficult to reconcile it with the wording of the text; hence Hitz. seeks arbitrarily to change שְׁלַחְתָּהּ into שְׁלַחְתָּהּ. And it is a worthless argument that Jeremiah cannot possibly have believed that the envoys would carry the yokes with them and deliver them to their masters. Why should not he have believed they would do so? And if they did not, it was their concern. The plur. "bands and yokes" may

indeed mean a single yoke, but it may also mean many; and the verbs *יָתַם* and *שָׁתַם*, both with plural suffixes, indicate clearly that he was to make not merely one yoke for himself, but yokes for himself and the kings. In chap. xxviii. 10 and 12, where *one* yoke is spoken of, the singular *הַיּוֹטֵם* is used; while, ver. 13, "yokes of wood hast thou broken," does not prove that this plural has the same force as the singular.

We are not told for what purpose ambassadors from the kings named had come to Jerusalem; but we can discover what it was from the message Jeremiah gives them for their lords. From this it appears, without a doubt, that they were come to take counsel as to a coalition with the view of throwing off the Chaldean supremacy. By God's command Jeremiah opposes this design with the announcement, that the God of Israel, the Creator of the world and of all creatures, has given all these lands (those of the kings named in ver. 3) into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar; that men, and even beasts, should serve him, *i.e.* that he might exercise unbounded dominion over these lands and all that belonged to them, cf. xxviii. 14. "My servant," as in xxv. 9. All nations are to serve him, his son and his grandson. These words simply express the long duration of the king of Babylon's power over them, without warranting us in concluding that he was succeeded on the throne by his son and his grandson, cf. Deut. vi. 2, iv. 25. For, as we know, Nebuchadnezzar was succeeded by his son Evil-Merodach; then came his brother-in-law Neriglissar, who murdered Evil-Merodach, who was followed by his son Laborosoarchod, a child, murdered after a nine months' reign by conspirators. Of these latter, Naboned ascended the throne of Babylon; and it was under his reign that the time for his land came that it should be made subject by many nations and great kings, cf. xxv. 14. *נָם הוּא* serves to strengthen the suffix on *אֶרְצוֹ*; and the suffix, like *בּוֹ*, refers to Nebuchadnezzar.¹ What is said in vers. 6 and 7 is made sterner by the threatening of ver. 8, that the Lord will punish with

¹ Ver. 7 is wanting in the LXX., and therefore Mov. and Hitz. pronounce it spurious. But, as Graf remarked, they have no sufficient reason for this, since, reference being had to ver. 16 and to xxviii. 3, 11, this verse is very much in place here. It is not a *vaticinium ex eventu*, as Hitz. asserts, but was rather omitted by the LXX., simply because its contents,

sword, famine, and pestilence the people and kingdom that will not serve Nebuchadnezzar. וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר introduces a second relative clause, the אֵת being here quite in place, since "the people and the kingdom" are accusatives made to precede absolutely, and resumed again by the 'עַל הַגּוֹי הַ' which belongs directly to the verb "visit." With עֲרִימֵי cf. xxiv. 10 and עֲרִיכְלוֹתֵי אֲהֶם, corresponding in meaning, in ix. 15.—Ver. 9 f. Therefore they must not hearken to their prophets, soothsayers, and sorcerers, that prophesy the contrary. The mention of dreams between the prophets and soothsayers on the one hand, and the enchanters and sorcerers on the other, strikes us as singular. It is, however, to be explained from the fact, that prophets and soothsayers often feigned dreams and dream-revelations (cf. xxiii. 25); and other persons, too, might have dreams, and could give them out as significant. Cf. xxix. 8, where dreams are expressly distinguished from the discourse of the prophets and soothsayers. Whether the reckoning of five kinds of heathen prophecy has anything to do with the naming of five kings (Hitz.), appears to us to be questionable; but it is certain that Jeremiah does not design to specify five different, i.e. distinct and separate, kinds of heathen divination. For there was in reality no such distinction. Heathen prophecy was closely allied with sorcery and soothsaying; cf. Deut. xviii. 9 f., and Oehler on the *Relation of Old Testament Prophecy to Heathen Divination* (Tüb. 1861). The enumeration of the multifarious means and methods for forecasting the future is designed to show the multitude of delusive schemes for supplying the lack of true and real divine inspiration. בְּשִׁפְיִים, equivalent to מְכַשְּׁפִים, the same which in Deut. xviii. 10 is used along with מְעוֹנֵן. The explanation of the last-mentioned word is disputed. Some take it from עָנָן, cloud = cloud-maker or storm-raiser; others from עֵינָן, eye = fascinator, the idea being that of bewitching with the evil eye; see on Lev. xix. 26. The use of the word along with מְנַחֵשׁ וּמְכַשֵּׁף, Deut. xviii. 10, favours the latter rendering, whereas no passage in which the word is used

taken literally, were not in keeping with the historical facts. The LXX. omit also the clause from "that will not serve" to "king of Babylon and," which is accordingly, and for other subjective reasons of taste, pronounced spurious by Hitz.; but Graf justly opposes this.

in the Old Testament supports the sig. storm-raiser. "That I should remove you," as is shown by the continuation of the infinitive by *וְהִדְרֹתִי*. The false prophets delude the people, inducing them to rise in rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar, contrary to God's will, and thus simply bringing about their expulsion from their land, *i.e.* removal into banishment. *לְמַעַן* shows, as frequently, that the inevitable consequence of these persons' proceedings is designed by them.—Ver. 11. The people, on the other hand, that bends under the yoke of the king of Babylon shall remain in its own land. For the great Asiatic conquerors contented themselves, in the first place, with thoroughly subjecting the vanquished nations and imposing a tribute; only in the case of stubborn resistance or of insurrection on the part of the conquered did they proceed to destroy the kingdoms and deport their populations. This Zedekiah and the ambassadors that had come to him might have learnt from Nebuchadnezzar's course of action after the capture of Jerusalem under Jehoiachin, as compared with that in Jehoiakim's time, had they not been utterly infatuated by the lying spirit of the false prophets, whose prophecies accommodated themselves to the wishes of the natural heart.

Vers. 12–15. To King Zedekiah Jeremiah addressed words of like import, saying: "Bring your necks into the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and ye shall live. Ver. 13. Why will ye die, thou and thy people, by sword, famine, and pestilence, as Jahveh hath spoken concerning the people that will not serve the king of Babylon? Ver. 14. And hearken not unto the words of the prophets that speak unto you: Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon; for they prophesy a lie unto you. Ver. 15. For I have not sent them, saith Jahveh, and they prophesy in my name falsely, that I might drive you out and ye might perish, ye and the prophets that prophesy unto you."—The discourse addressed to the king in the plural, "bring your necks," etc., is explained by the fact that, as ver. 13 shows, in and along with the king his people are addressed. The imperative *וְהָיִיתֶם* intimates the consequence of the preceding command. Ver. 13 gives the application of the threat in ver. 8 to King Zedekiah and his people; and ver. 14 f. gives the warning corresponding to

vers. 9 and 10 against the sayings of the lying prophets; cf. chap. xiv. 14 and xxiii. 16, 21.

Vers. 16-22. The priests and all the people are warned to give no belief to the false prophesyings of a speedy restoration of the vessels carried off to Babylon.—Ver. 16. "Thus hath Jahveh said: Hearken not to the sayings of your prophets that prophesy unto you: Behold, the vessels of Jahveh's house shall now shortly be brought again from Babylon; for they prophesy a lie unto you. Ver. 17. Hearken not unto them; serve the king of Babylon and live; wherefore should this city become a desert? Ver. 18. But if they be prophets, and if the word of Jahveh be with them, let them now make intercession to Jahveh of hosts, that the vessels which are left in the house of Jahveh, and in the king's house, and in Jerusalem, go not to Babylon. Ver. 19. For thus saith Jahveh of hosts concerning the pillars and the [brazen] sea and the frames, and concerning the other vessels that are left in this city, Ver. 20. Which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took not away when he carried away captive Jechoniah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah from Jerusalem to Babylon, with all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem. Ver. 21. For thus saith Jahveh of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning the vessels that are left in the house of Jahveh, and in the house of the king of Judah, and in Jerusalem: Ver. 22. To Babylon shall they be brought, and there shall they remain until the day that I visit them, saith Jahveh, and carry them up, and bring them back to this place."

Here Jeremiah gives King Zedekiah warning that the prophecies of a speedy end to Chaldean bondage are lies, and that confidence in such lies will hurry on the ruin of the state. He at the same time disabuses the priests of the hope raised by the false prophets, that the vessels of the temple and of the palace that had been carried off at the time Jechoniah was taken to Babylon will very soon be restored; and assures them that such statements can only procure the destruction of the city, since their tendency is to seduce king and people to rebellion, and rebellion against the king of Babylon means the destruction of Jerusalem,—a prophecy that was but too soon fulfilled. The vessels of the temple, ver. 16, are the golden

vessels Solomon caused to be made (1 Kings vii. 48 f.), which Nebuchadnezzar had carried to Babylon, 2 Kings xxiv. 13. מִבְּבֶלְיָה, from towards Babylon, *i.e.* from Babylon, whither they had been taken; cf. Ew. § 216, *b*. "Now shortly," lit. hastily or speedily, *i.e.* ere long, cf. xxviii. 3, where the prophet Hananiah foretells the restoration of them within two years, in opposition to Jeremiah's affirmation that the exile will last seventy years.¹ To show more clearly the irreconcilableness of his own position with that of the false prophets, Jeremiah further tells what true prophets, who have the word of Jahveh, would do. They would betake themselves in intercession to the Lord, seeking to avert yet further calamity or punishment, as all the prophets sent by God, including Jeremiah himself, did, cf. vii. 16. They should endeavour by intercession to prevent the vessels that are still left in Jerusalem from being taken away. The extraordinary expression לְבַלְתִּי בֹאֵי has probably come from the omission of Jod from the verb, which should be read יָבֹאֵי. As it stands, it can only be imperative, which is certainly not suitable. לְבַלְתִּי is usually construed with the infinitive, but occasionally also with the *temp. fin.*; with the imperf., which is what the sense here demands, in Ex. xx. 20; with the perf., Jer. xxiii. 14.—Of the temple furniture still remaining, he mentions in ver. 19 as most valuable the two golden pillars, *Jachin* and *Boaz*, 1 Kings vii. 15 ff., the brazen sea, 1 Kings vii. 23 ff., and הַמִּסְכָּנוֹת, the artistic waggon frames for the basins in which to wash the sacrificial flesh, 1 Kings vii. 27 ff.; and he declares they too shall be carried to Babylon, as happened at the destruction of Jerusalem, 2 Kings xxv. 13 ff. (בְּהִגְלוֹתוֹ בְּגִלְוָתוֹ).²

¹ These words are not given in LXX., and so Mov. and Hitz. pronounce them spurious. Haev., on the other hand, and with greater justice, says (*Introd.* ii. 2), that the LXX. omitted the words, because, according to an Alexandrian legend, the temple furniture was really very soon restored, even in Zedekiah's time, cf. Baruch i. 8 ff.; so that the false prophets were in the right. The passage cited from Baruch does not indeed give a very rigorous proof of this. It alleges that the silver vessels which Zedekiah had caused to be made after Jechoniah's exile had been brought back by Baruch. But considering the innumerable arbitrary interferences of the LXX. with the text of Jeremiah, the omission of the words in question cannot justify the slightest critical suspicion of their genuineness.

² The statement in vers. 19-22 is wide and diffuse; it is therefore con-

Chap. xxviii. AGAINST THE FALSE PROPHET HANANIAH.—Vers. 1-4. This man's prophecy. At the same time, namely in the fourth year of Zedekiah (cf. rem. on xxvii. 1. The *Chet.* בִּשְׁנֵי is supported by xlvi. 2 and li. 59; the *Keri* בִּשְׁנָה is an unnecessary alteration), in the fifth month, spake *Hananiah* the son of *Azur*,—a prophet not otherwise known, belonging to Gibeon, a city of the priests (Josh. xxi. 17; now *Jib*, a large village two hours north-west of Jerusalem; see on Josh. ix. 3), possibly therefore himself a priest,—in the house of the Lord, in the presence of the priests and people assembled there, saying: Ver. 2. "Thus hath Jahveh of hosts, the God of Israel, said: I break the yoke of the king of Babylon. Ver. 3. Within two years I bring again into this place the vessels of the house of Jahveh, which Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon took away from this place and carried them to Babylon. Ver. 4. And Jechoniah, the son of Jehoiakim the king of Judah, and all the captives of Judah that went into Babylon, bring I again to this place, saith Jahveh; for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon."—The false prophet endeavours to stamp on

densed in the LXX., but at the same time mutilated. From the fact *Mov.*, with *Hitz.* agreeing thereto, concludes that the Hebr. text has been expanded by means of glosses. Graf has already shown in reply to this, that the hand of a later glossator interpolating materials from lii. 17, 2 Kings xxv. 13 and xxiv. 1 is not betrayed in the extended account of the furniture remaining, and of the occasion on which it was left behind. He goes on to show that it is rather the editorial hand of Baruch than the hand of the glossator that is to be presumed from the fact that, in consequence of the narrative part of ver. 20, ver. 19 is repeated in ver. 21; and from the further fact that it is impossible here to discriminate the interpolated from the original matter. Graf has also so conclusively proved the worthlessness of the distinguishing marks of the glossator adduced by *Mov.* and *Hitz.*, that we adopt in full his argument. Such marks are (we are told), (1) the *scriptio plena* of מְכוֹנוֹת here, as contrasted with lii. 17, 2 Kings xxv. 13, 2 Chron. iv. 14, and of יְכוֹנִיָּה, as against xxiv. 1, xxviii. 4, xxix. 2; and yet the interpolations in vers. 19 and 20 are said to have been taken directly from lii. 17 and xxiv. 1. (2) The expression חָרִים, which is alleged not to have come into use till the exile. But the fact of its standing here and in xxxix. 6 is enough to show it to have been earlier in use; cf. also 1 Kings xxi. 8, 11; and since it is *not* used in xxiv. 1 and xxix. 2, it is certain that it has not been got from there. (3) The "slip-shod" וִירוּשָׁלַיִם, ver. 21, for וּבִירוּשָׁלַיִם, ver. 18, which is, however, occasioned simply by the preceding accusative of place, בְּבֵית יְהוָה וגו' (ver. 18 also בְּבֵית יְהוָה).

his prediction the impress of a true, God-inspired prophecy, by copying the title of God, so often used by Jeremiah, "Jahveh of hosts, the God of Israel," and by giving the utmost definiteness to his promise: "within two years" (in contrast to Jeremiah's seventy years). "Two years" is made as definite as possible by the addition of שְׁנָיִם: two years in days, *i.e.* in two full years. See on Gen. xli. 1, 2 Sam. xiii. 23.

Vers. 5-11. *Jeremiah's reply.*—First Jeremiah admits that the fulfilment of this prediction would be desirable (ver. 6), but then reminds his opponent that all the prophets of the Lord up till this time have prophesied of war and calamity (vers. 7 and 8). So that if a prophet, in opposition to these witnesses of God, predicts nothing but peace and safety, then nothing short of the fulfilment of his prediction can make good his claim to be a true prophet (ver. 9).—Jeremiah's answer is to this effect: Ver. 6. "Amen (*i.e.* yea), may Jahveh so do! may Jahveh perform thy words which thou hast prophesied, to bring again the vessels of Jahveh's house and all the captives from Babylon into this place. Ver. 7. Only hear now this word that I speak in thine ears, and in the ears of all the people. Ver. 8. The prophets that were before me and before thee from of old, they prophesied concerning many lands and great kingdoms, of war, and of trouble, and of pestilence. Ver. 9. The prophet that prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet cometh to pass, shall be known as the prophet that Jahveh hath truly sent."—As to שָׁלוֹם, *yea*, see on xi. 5. The scope of this assent is straightway defined in "may Jahveh so do." But in order that the hearers may not misunderstand his assent, Jeremiah proceeds to show that hitherto only threatening predictions have carried with them the presumption of their being true prophecies, inasmuch as it is these alone that have been in harmony with the predictions of all previous prophets. וְיִנְבְּאוּ (ver. 8) is explained by the fact that "the prophets" with the accompanying relative clause is made to precede absolute-wise. In the same absolute manner the clause "the prophet . . . peace" is disposed so that after the verb יִרְעֶה the word הַנְּבִיאַהּ is repeated. For לְרַעַה many mss. have לְרַעַב; manifestly an adaptation to passages like xiv. 12, xxi. 9, xxiv. 10, xxvii. 8, 13, xxix. 17 f., where sword, famine, and pestilence are mentioned to-

gether as three modes of visitation by God ; whereas only the general word לָעָר seems in place here, when mentioned alongside of "war." For this very reason Hitz. rejects לָעָר as being the least difficult reading, while Ew. takes it under his protection on account of the parallel passages, not considering that the train of thought is different here.—The truth expressed in ver. 9 is based on the Mosaic law concerning prophecy, Deut. xviii. 21 f., where the fulfilment of the prediction is given as the test of true, God-inspired prophecy.—Ver. 10 f. Had Hananiah been sent by the Lord, he might have been satisfied with Jeremiah's opinion, and have contentedly awaited the issue. But instead of this, he seeks by means of violence to secure credence for his prophesying. He takes the yoke from off the neck of the prophet, and breaks it in pieces, as he repeats before the people his former prediction : "Thus hath Jahveh said : Even so will I break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon from the neck of all nations within two years."—Thereupon Jeremiah went his way without answering a word, calmly entrusting to the Lord the vindication of the truth of His own word.

Vers. 12-17. *The Lord's testimony against Hananiah.*—Apparently not long after Jeremiah had departed, he received from the Lord the commission to go to Hananiah and to say to him : Ver. 13. "Thus saith Jahveh : Yokes of wood hast thou broken, but hast made in place of them yokes of iron. Ver. 14. For thus saith Jahveh of hosts, the God of Israel : A yoke of iron I lay upon the neck of all these nations, that they may serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and they shall serve him ; and the beasts of the field also have I given him."—When the prophet says : Yokes of wood hast thou broken, etc., we are not to understand him as speaking of the breaking of the wooden yoke Jeremiah had been wearing ; he gives the deeper meaning of that occurrence. By breaking Jeremiah's wooden yoke, Hananiah has only signified that the yoke Nebuchadnezzar lays on the nations will not be so easily broken as a wooden one, but is of iron, *i.e.* not to be broken. The plural "yokes" is to be explained by the emblematical import of the words, and is not here to be identified, as it sometimes may be, with the singular, ver. 10. Ver. 14 shows in what sense

Hananiah put an iron yoke in the place of the wooden one: Jahveh will lay iron yokes on all nations, that they may serve the king of Babel. Hananiah's breaking the wooden yoke does not alter the divine decree, but is made to contribute to its fuller revelation. With the last clause of ver. 14, cf. xxvii. 6.—Hereupon Jeremiah forewarns the false prophets what is to be God's punishment on them for their false and audacious declarations. Ver. 15. "Hear now, Hananiah: Jahveh hath not sent thee, and thou hast made this people to believe a lie. Ver. 16. Therefore thus saith Jahveh: Behold, I cast thee from off the face of the earth; this year shalt thou die, for thou hast spoken rebellion against Jahveh." "The year" = this year, as in Isa. xxxvii. 30. The words "for thou hast spoken," etc., recall Dent. xiii. 6. They involve an application to Hananiah's case of the command there given to put such a prophet to death, and show how it can with justice be said that the Lord will cast him from off the face of the earth. The verb *בְּשַׁלְחֵךְ* is chosen for the sake of the play on *לֹא שְׁלַחְךָ*. God has not sent him as prophet to His people, but will send him away from off the earth, *i.e.* cause him to die.—In ver. 17 it is recorded that this saying was soon fulfilled. Hananiah died in the seventh month of that year, *i.e.* two months after his controversy with Jeremiah (cf. ver. 1).

Chap. xxix. A LETTER FROM JEREMIAH TO THE CAPTIVES IN BABYLON, TOGETHER WITH THREATENINGS AGAINST THEIR FALSE PROPHETS.—As in Jerusalem, so too in Babylon the predictions of the false prophets fostered a lively hope that the domination of Nebuchadnezzar would not last long, and that the return of the exiles to their fatherland would soon come about. The spirit of discontent thus excited must have exercised an injurious influence on the fortunes of the captives, and could not fail to frustrate the aim which the chastisement inflicted by God was designed to work out, namely, the moral advancement of the people. Therefore Jeremiah makes use of an opportunity furnished by an embassy sent by King Zedekiah to Babel, to address a letter to the exiles, exhorting them to yield with submission to the lot God had assigned to them. He counsels them to prepare, by establishing their households there,

for a long sojourn in Babel, and to seek the welfare of that country as the necessary condition of their own. They must not let themselves be deceived by the false prophets' idle promises of a speedy return, since God will not bring them back and fulfil His glorious promises till after seventy years have passed (vers. 4-14). Then he tells them that sore judgments are yet in store for King Zedekiah and such as have been left in the land (vers. 15-20); and declares that some of their false prophets shall perish miserably (vers. 21-32).

Vers. 1-3. *Heading and Introduction.*—The following circular is connected, in point of outward form, with the preceding discourses against the false prophets in Jerusalem by means of the words: "And these are the words of the letter," etc. The words of the letter, *i.e.* the main contents of the letter, since it was not transcribed, but given in substance. "Which the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem unto the residue of the elders of the captives, and to the priests and prophets, and to the whole people, which Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from Jerusalem to Babylon." "The residue of the elders," Hitz. and Graf understand of those elders who were not at the same time priests or prophets. On this Näg. pronounces: "It is impossible that they can be right, for then 'the residue of the elders of the captivity' must have stood after the priests and prophets." And though we hear of elders of the priests, there is no trace in the O. T. of elders of the prophets. Besides, the elders, whenever they are mentioned along with the priests, are universally the elders of the people. Thus must we understand the expression here also. "The residue of the elders" can only be the remaining, *i.e.* still surviving, elders of the exiles, as יְתָר is used also in xxxix. 9 for those still in life. But there is no foundation for the assumption by means of which Gr. seeks to support his interpretation, namely, that the place of elders that died was immediately filled by new appointments, so that the council of the elders must always have been regarded as a whole, and could not come to be a residue or remnant. Jeremiah could not possibly have assumed the existence of such an organized governing authority, since in this very letter he exhorts them to set about the establishment of regular system in their affairs. The date given in ver. 2:

“after that Jechoniah the king, and the sovereign lady, and the courtiers, the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, the workmen and smiths, were gone away from Jerusalem,” points to the beginning of Zedekiah’s reign, to the first or second year of it. With this the advice given to the captives in the letter harmonizes well, namely, the counsel to build houses, plant gardens, etc.; since this makes it clear that they had not been long there. The despatch of this letter is usually referred to the fourth year of Zedekiah’s reign, because in xxviii. 1 this year is specified. But the connection in point of matter between the present chapter and chap. xxviii. does not necessarily imply their contemporaneousness, although that is perfectly possible; and the fact that, according to li. 59, Zedekiah himself undertook a journey to Babylon in the fourth year of his reign, does not exclude the possibility of an embassy thither in the same year. The going away from Jerusalem is the emigration to Babylon; cf. xxiv. 1, 2 Kings xxiv. 15. הַנְּבִיָּאָה, the queen-mother, see on xiii. 18. סְרִיסִים are the officials of the court; not necessarily eunuchs. Both words are joined to the king, because these stood in closest relations to him. Then follows without copula the second class of emigrants, the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, *i.e.* the heads of the tribes, septs, and families of the nation. The artisans form the third class. This disposes of the objections raised by Mov. and Hitz. against the genuineness of the words “princes of Judah and Jerusalem,” their objections being based on the false assumption that these words were an exposition of “courtiers.” Cf. against this, 2 Kings xxiv. 15, where along with the סְרִיסִים the heads of tribes and families are comprehended under the head of הָאֲרָצִי. Ver. 3. “By the hand” of *Elasah* is dependent on “sent,” ver. 1. The men by whom Jeremiah sent the letter to Babylon are not further known. *Shaphan* is perhaps the same who is mentioned in xxvi. 24. We have no information as to the aim of the embassy.

Vers. 4–14. At ver. 4 the contents of the letter begin. Jeremiah warns the people to prepare for a lengthened sojourn in Babylonia, and exhorts them to settle down there. Ver. 5. “Build houses and dwell (therein), and plant gardens and eat the fruit of them. Ver. 6. Take wives and beget sons and

daughters, and take for your sons wives and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; and increase there and not diminish. Ver. 7. And seek the safety of the city whither I have carried you captive, and pray for it to Jahveh, and in its safety shall be safety to you." The imperatives "increase and not diminish" give the consequence of what has been said just before. "The city whither I have carried you captive" is not precisely Babylon, but every place whither separate companies of the exiles have been transported. And pray for the city whither you are come, because in this you further your own welfare, instead of looking for advantage to yourselves from the fall of the Chaldean empire, from the calamity of your heathen fellow-citizens.—With this is suitably joined immediately the warning against putting trust in the delusive hopes held out by the false prophets. "For thus saith Jahveh of hosts, the God of Israel: Let not your prophets, that are in the midst of you, and your soothsayers, deceive you, and hearken not to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed; for falsely they prophesy to you in my name; I have not sent them, saith Jahveh." מַחֲלָמִים is somewhat singular, since we have no other example of the Hiph. of חָלַם in its sig. dream (in Isa. xxxviii. 16 the Hiph. of the same root means to preserve in good health); but the Hiph. may here express the people's spontaneity in the matter of dreams: which ye cause to be dreamed for you (Hitz.). Thus there would be no need to alter the reading into חֲלָמִים; a precedent for the defective spelling being found in מַעֲזָרִים, 2 Chron. xxviii. 23. What the false prophets gave out is not expressly intimated, but may be gathered from the context ver. 10, namely, that the yoke of Babylon would soon be broken and captivity come to an end.—This warning is justified in vers. 10-14, where God's decree is set forth. The deliverance will not come about till after seventy years; but then the Lord will fulfil to His people His promise of grace. Ver. 10. "For thus saith Jahveh: When as seventy years are fulfilled for Babylon, I will visit you, and perform to you my good word, to bring you back to this place. Ver. 11. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith Jahveh, thoughts of peace and not for evil, to give you (a) destiny and hope. Ver. 12. And ye will call upon me, and go and pray

unto me, and I will hear you. Ver. 13. And ye will seek me, and find me, if ye search for me with all your heart. Ver. 14. And I will let myself be found of you, saith Jahveh, and will turn your captivity, and gather you out of all the peoples and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith Jahveh, and will bring you again to the place whence I have carried you away."—לְפִי קִלְאֶת, according to the measure of the fulfilment of seventy years for Babel. These words point back to chap. xxv. 11 f., and we must reckon from the date of that prediction. קָרָא *c. accus.* sig. to visit in a good sense, to look favourably on one and take his part. "My good word" is expounded by the following infinitive clause. Ver. 11. "I know my thoughts" is not to be taken, as by Jerome, J. D. Mich., etc., as in contrast with the false prophets: I know, but they do not. This antithesis is not in keeping with what follows. The meaning is rather: Although I appoint so long a term for the fulfilment of the plan of redemption, yet fear not that I have utterly rejected you; I know well what my design is in your regard. My thoughts toward you are thoughts of good, not of evil. Although now I inflict lengthened sufferings on you, yet this chastisement but serves to bring about your welfare in the future (Chr. B. Mich., Graf, etc.).—To give you אֶתְרִית, lit. last, *i.e.* issue or future, and hope. For this sig. cf. Job viii. 7, Prov. v. 4, etc. This future destiny and hope can, however, only be realized if by the sorrows of exile you permit yourselves to be brought to a knowledge of your sins, and return penitent to me. Then ye will call on me and pray, and I will hear you. "And ye will go," ver. 12, is not the apodosis to "ye will call," since there is no further explanation of it, and since the simple הֵלֵךְ can neither mean to go away satisfied nor to have success. "Go" must be taken with what follows: go to the place of prayer (Ew., Umbr., Gr., Näg.). In ver. 13 אֵת is to be repeated after "find." Vers. 12 and 13 are a renewal of the promise, Deut. iv. 29, 30; and ver. 14 is a brief summary of the promise, Deut. xxx. 3–5, whence is taken the graphic expression שׁוּב אֶת־יְשׁוּבוֹת; see on that passage.—Thereafter in

Vers. 15–20. Jeremiah informs the captives of the judgment that is to fall on such as are still left in the land. Ver. 15. "If

ye say: Jahveh hath raised us up prophets in Babylon—Ver. 16. Yea, thus saith Jahveh of the king that sitteth upon the throne of David, and of all the people that dwelleth in this city, your brethren that are not gone forth with you into captivity, Ver. 17. Thus saith Jahveh of hosts: Behold, I send amongst them the sword, famine, and pestilence, and make them like horrible figs, that cannot be eaten for badness, Ver. 18. And hunt after them with the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, and give them to be abused to all the kingdoms of the earth, to be a curse, and an astonishment, and a hissing, and a reproach among all the peoples whither I have driven them; Ver. 19. Inasmuch as they have not hearkened to my words, saith Jahveh, wherewith I sent to them my servants the prophets, from early morning on sending them, and ye have not hearkened, saith Jahveh. Ver. 20. But ye, hear the word of Jahveh, all ye captives whom I have sent from Jerusalem to Babylon.”—The design with which Jeremiah tells the captives of this judgment may be gathered from the terms of ver. 15, with which this prophecy is introduced: God hath raised up to us prophets in Babel (בְּבָבֶל, lit. as far as Babel, *i.e.* extending His agency so far beyond the bounds of Judah). Hence it is clear that the announcement of judgment to come on those left in the land is in direct opposition to the predictions of the prophets that had appeared in Babylon. These prophesied a swift end to Chaldean domination and an immediate return of the exiles to their fatherland. So long as one of David’s posterity sat on his throne in Jerusalem, and so long as the kingdom of Judah was maintained, the partial captivity of the people and removal of the plundered treasures of the temple would appear as a calamity which might soon be repaired. The false prophets in Babylon laid, therefore, great stress on the continued existence of the kingdom, with its capital and the temple, in their efforts to obtain belief amongst the exiles. As Näg. justly remarks, it was to take this ground from beneath their feet that Jeremiah predicted expulsion and destruction against the people of Jerusalem. The prophecy does indeed bear upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, “but not in the first reference; its immediate purpose was to overthrow the foundations on which the false prophets of the exile stood” (Näg.). Taken thus, these verses

form an integral part of the message sent by Jeremiah to the exiles, which was of no small weight for quieting the excitement, nourished by the false prophets, which reigned amongst them. One is struck by the want of connection between vers. 15 and 16. The beginning of ver. 16, "Yea, thus saith," comes directly after the end of ver. 15 without any joining link. Näg. holds the 'פ to be the pleonastic 'פ which often introduces a saying. But its position before the "thus saith" makes this impossible. Here it serves to strengthen the asseveration: *yea*, thus fitly introducing what Jahveh says to the contrary; and vers. 15 and 16 are, tersely and immediately, set over against one another. "If ye say" means: as regards your saying that Jahveh hath raised you up prophets in Babylon, the answer is: Thus hath Jahveh said. This is the connection of ver. 16 with ver. 15.¹ "Your brethren that," etc., is co-ordinate with "all the people." The words: "I make them like horrible figs," make allusion to the vision in chap. xxiv. 2 ff., but do not imply that this vision

¹ By the above exposition of the connection and progress of the thought, are disposed of all the objections that have been brought by Houb., Lud. Capp., Ven., etc., against the genuineness of these verses, or, at least, against the true position for them. The fact of their being wanting in the LXX., on which Hitz. mainly grounds his charge of spuriousness, proves nothing more than that these translators were unable to understand the train of thought in the verses, especially seeing that the substance of them has several times been expressed by Jeremiah, particularly vers. 17 and 18; xxiv. 9, 10, cf. xv. 4, xix. 8; with ver. 19 cf. vii. 13, 25 f. Against the attempts to alter the text, Graf's remarks are admirable: "It is much easier to explain how the passage was omitted as out of place by the LXX. than to show how it could have been introduced as an interpolation. It is too long for a mere marginal gloss that had at a later time found its way into the text; and why it should have been placed here, would remain all the more incomprehensible if it were so wholly unconnected with the body of the text. We cannot admit that it is merely an erroneous displacement of ver. 15, which originally stood before ver. 21; since it is less likely that ver. 16 could have come directly after ver. 14. In respect of form, vers. 16-20 is connected with and forms a continuation of what precedes. Ver. 20 implies the presence of ver. 16 as an antithesis, and at the same time completes again the connection that had been interrupted with ver. 15, and leads on to ver. 21 ff. Connection in thought seems to be wanting only because ver. 16 does not express the connecting idea, and because the contrast is so abrupt."—The other arguments adduced by Hitz. to throw suspicion on the passage, we can afford to pass over as wholly without force.

was known to the exiles, for they are quite intelligible to him who knows nothing of chap. xxiv. (Näg.). The adjct. נִשְׁעָר is found only here, from נִשְׁעַר, shudder; horrible, that on tasting which one shudders. With ver. 18, cf. xxiv. 9. "Wherewith I sent my servants," *i.e.* commissioned them. This verb construed with double accus. as in 2 Sam. xi. 22, Isa. lv. 11. "Ye have not hearkened," the 2d pers. instead of the 3d, is hardly to be explained by the fact that the prophet here cites in full an often quoted saying (Hitz., Næg., etc.). The reason is that the prophet is thinking of the exiles also as having been equal to their brethren remaining in Judah in the matter of not hearkening. Thus the way is prepared for the summons: But ye, hear, ver. 20.

Vers. 21-23. After having set forth the divine determination, the prophet's letter addresses itself specially against the false prophets and tells them their punishment from God. Ver. 21. "Thus saith Jahveh, the God of hosts, of Ahab the son of Kolaiah, and of Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah, who prophesy to you in my name falsely: Behold, I give them into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, that he may smite them before your eyes. Ver. 22. And of them shall be taken up a curse by all the exiles of Judah that are in Babylon, saying: Jahveh make thee like Zedekiah and like Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire, Ver. 23. Because they have done folly in Israel, and have committed adultery with their neighbours' wives, and have spoken in my name lying words which I have not commanded them. But I know it and am witness, saith Jahveh."—Beyond what is here told, we know nothing of these two pseudo-prophets. The name נִכְלָיָה is written in ver. 20 without ם; thus the Kametz comes to be under the ך, and in consequence of this the Pathach is changed into a Seghol. "Smite," *i.e.* slay. The manner of their death is called, probably with allusion to the name *Kolaiah*, כֹּלָיָה, roast, burn in a heated furnace; a mode of execution usual in Babylon, acc. to Dan. iii. 6. This punishment is to fall on them because of two kinds of sin: 1. Because they have done folly in Israel, namely, committed adultery with their neighbours' wives; 2. Because they have prophesied falsely in the name of Jahveh. Except in Josh. vii. 15, the phrase: commit folly in Israel, is

always used of the grosser sins of uncleanness; see on Gen. xxxiv. 7. So here also.—The *Chet.* הוירע is expounded in the *Keri* by הוירע, according to which there has been a transposition of the letters ו and י, as in ii. 25, viii. 6, etc. Still the article here is extraordinary, since ער has none. Therefore J. D. Mich., Ew., Hitz., Graf suppose we should read הוירע, the א having been dropped from הוירע in *scriptio continua*, as it often is, especially after י, in הוירע and other words, cf. xix. 15, xxxix. 16, 1 Kings xxi. 29, etc. הוירע is then the copula between subject and predicate, as in Isa. xliii. 25; cf. Ew. § 297, b.

Vers. 24–32. *Threatening against the false prophet Shemaiah.*—Jeremiah's letter to the exiles (vers. 1–23) had excited great indignation among the false prophets in Babylon, who predicted speedy restoration. One of them, named *Shemaiah*, wrote accordingly letters to Jerusalem addressed to the people, and especially to the priest *Zephaniah*, who held the highest place in the management of the temple, insisting that he should immediately take steps to punish Jeremiah and check his labours (vers. 24–28). When *Zephaniah* read this letter to Jeremiah, the latter received from God the commission to tell the pseudo-prophet of the punishment awaiting him, that he and his race should perish and not survive Israel's liberation (vers. 29–32).—This threatening accordingly dates from a somewhat later time than the letter, vers. 1–23, since it was its arrival and influence upon the exiles that led *Shemaiah* to write to Jerusalem that letter, to which the threatening of the present verse is the reply. But on account of their historical connection, the letter of Jeremiah and that of *Shemaiah* were, at the publication of Jeremiah's prophecies, placed the one after the other.—From the introductory clause of ver. 24: "And to *Shemaiah* the *Nehelamite* thou shalt speak thus," we might conclude, with Graf, that what Jeremiah had to say was not addressed by letter to *Shemaiah* himself; and hold it to have sufficed that he should read it, like all the exiles, in the letter which doubtless found its way to Babylon. But this is incompatible with the command of God, ver. 31: Send to all the captives, saying, etc. For it was only by writing that Jeremiah could send to the exiles the sentence from God on *Shemaiah* that follows in ver. 31. The introductory clause is therefore

interposed by the author of the book to form a link of connection between the two utterances regarding the pseudo-prophets at Babylon. We cannot make sure whether "the Nehelamite" refers the man to a family or to a place of which we know nothing else. Ver. 25. Next the introduction to the divine sentence comes (from "Because thou" on) a statement of the occasion that called for it, which extends to ver. 28. Then in vers. 29-31 we are told that Zephaniah read to Jeremiah the letter he had received from Shemaiah in Babylon, and that Jeremiah was then commissioned by God to intimate to Shemaiah the punishment to be sent on him by God for his false and seducing prophecies. Then, again, attached to the preliminary statement by "therefore," the introductory phrase "Thus saith Jahveh" is repeated, and what the Lord said follows.—Ver. 25. "Because thou hast sent in thy name (without divine commission) letters to all the people in Jerusalem, and to Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, and to all the priests, saying." ספרים may be a single letter, cf. 2 Kings x. 1, 2; but since these were sent to the people, the priest Zephaniah, and all the people, the word doubtless means here letters in the plural. As to Zephaniah ben Maaseiah, see at xxi. 1.—In vers. 26-28 follows the main substance of the letter: "Jahveh hath set thee to be priest in the stead of the priest Jehoiada, that there should be officers in the house of Jahveh for every man that is mad and prophesieth, that thou shouldest put him in the stocks and in neck-irons. Ver. 27. And, now, why hast thou not restrained Jeremiah of Anathoth, that prophesieth to you? Ver. 28. For therefore hath he sent to us to Babylon (a letter) to the effect: It will last long; build houses and dwell (therein), and plant gardens and eat the fruit of them." Zephaniah occupied, acc. to ver. 26, the post of a chief officer of the temple, was a chief warden, as Pashur had been before him, xxi. 1, who had charge of the police regulations of the temple. In the stead of the priest Jehoiada. These words Grot., Hitz., and Gr. refer to the high priest Jehoiada under King Joash, 2 Kings xi. 18, who set up officers (פקידות) over the temple. But this view cannot be reconciled with the words of the text: "Jahveh hath set thee to be priest in Jehoiada's stead, that there should be officers;" since from these unambiguous

words, Zephaniah filled the same post as Jehoiada had done, and was his successor in office. The other well-known Jehoiada was high priest, who appointed officers; Zephaniah, on the other hand was only "the second priest," and as such had charge of the temple arrangements and of public order there. Nor is there any hint here or elsewhere that Zephaniah was the immediate successor of Pashur in this office, nor any indication to make it unlikely that Jehoiada held the post after Pashur and that Zedekiah succeeded him. The plural "officers" is general: that at all times there should be officers. "For every man that is mad and prophesieth." מְשֻׁנָּע, the deranged or mad person, is here closely associated with מְתַנַּבֵּא, him that bears himself as prophet. The former word is used in the evil sense of the apparently deranged behaviour of the man on whom the Spirit of God has laid hold, 2 Kings ix. 11, Hos. ix. 7. The idea is not: for (or against) every prophet, but: for every madman that plays the prophet. The temple, *i.e.* the outer court of the temple, was the usual place for prophets to take their stand. Shemaiah accordingly means that it was the duty of the chief warden of the temple to repress attempts to speak in the temple on the part of pretended prophets, by putting such persons in stocks and irons. As to מְהַפְּכֵת, see on xx. 2. צִיִּן is ἀπ. λεγ. It certainly does not mean prison after צָנָן, in Samaritan = *clausit*; but apparently neck-irons after צִנָּן, necklace, ring.

Since both words are used together here, and since the meaning is apparently that Jeremiah should be put into both instruments at once, Hitz. conjectures that both together were needed to make the stocks complete, but that each had its own proper name, because it was possible to fix in the neck, leaving hands and feet free, or conversely, as in xx. 2.—נָעַר, rebuke, check by threats, restrain, cf. Ruth ii. 16, Mal. iii. 11, etc. "For therefore," *sc.* just because thou hast not restrained him from prophesying he has sent to Babylon. שְׁלֵחַ with לֵאמֹר following, send to say, means: to send a message or letter as follows. לֵאמֹר אֶרְפָּה הִיא Hitz. renders: for he thought: it (Babylon) is far away; Jeremiah's meaning being, that in Jerusalem they would know nothing about his letter he was sending to Babylon. But such a hidden purpose is utterly foreign to the character of

the prophet. He had publicly predicted in Jerusalem the long seventy years' duration of the exile; and it was not likely to occur to him to wish to make a secret of the letter of like import which he sent to Babylon. Besides, Hitz.'s interpretation is forced. Since there is no *לְאמֹר* before *בְּנֵי בָתָיִם*, the *לְאמֹר* before *אֶרְכָּה* can only be introductory to the contents of the letter. For *אָרְךָ* used of duration in time, cf. 2 Sam. iii. 1, Job xi. 9. "Long-lasting it is," *sc.* your sojourn in Babylon. These words give the burden of his prophecy, that on which he founded his counsel: build houses, etc.—Ver. 29. Zephaniah read aloud to Jeremiah the letter he had received from Babylon. With what design, we are not told; probably simply to inform him of the proceedings of the pseudo-prophets in Babylon. If we may judge by xxi. 1 and xxxvii. 3, Zephaniah seems to have been friendly to Jeremiah.—Ver. 30 ff. In consequence of this, Jeremiah received from the Lord the commission to predict to Shemaiah his punishment at the hand of God, and to send the prediction to all that are in Babylon in banishment. With ver. 31b, cf. xxviii. 15. The punishment is this: Shemaiah shall have no posterity among his people, *i.e.* of his children none shall be left amongst the people, nor shall he see, *i.e.* experience, have any share in the blessings which the Lord will yet bestow upon His people. The extinction of his race and his own exclusion from the privilege of seeing the day of Israel's redemption are the punishment that is to fall on him for his rebellion against the commandment of the Lord. With *כִּי קָרָה ד'* cf. xxviii. 16.

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